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Willem Defoe interview in G2



The answer, G2 page 4



Education, G2 page 10

Army on standby over bug

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

THE army will be called in to assist the police from "hotspot to hotspot" in the event of a collapse in public services caused by the millennium bug next year, a chief constable confirmed yesterday.

The army will be asked to provide air support and other military back-up to police if computer-controlled emergency services, hospitals, transport systems and other networks break down because they fail to recognise the double zero as the year 2000 begins.

The planned use of army Chinook helicopters to airlift police around the country raises the prospect of motorway chaos because of the shutdown of the computer-controlled anti-congestion warning systems. Millennium bug problems are also officially regarded as posing a potential threat to electricity and telecommunication services.

John Evans, chief constable of Devon and Cornwall, yesterday confirmed on behalf of the Association of Chief Police Officers that talks are going on with the military over their role in emergency civil defence planning because of the chance of civil disruption triggered by the computer bug problem.

"Discussions are going on up and down the country with top army officers," said Mr Evans. "From there, individual forces are making their plans to see what military assistance they will be able to make use of in the event of difficulties."

The talks are part of regular police contact with the army. The possibility of military involvement to deal with large-scale disruption caused by the millennium bug first



'Individual forces are making plans to see what military assistance they will have in the event of difficulties'

emerged in a leaked letter from the Scottish Secretary, Donald Dewar, to the Defence Secretary, George Robertson.

Mr Dewar said that the troops would be needed to maintain public services, but Downing Street dismissed the warning as the "worst case or Apocalyptic Now scenario" in a letter arguing against proposed cuts in the Territorial Army, to be detailed today.

Now Mr Evans has publicly confirmed that the army is an essential part of contingency planning for next year in the event of widespread civil disruption.

However, Mr Evans denied

that the army was involved in "doomsday scenario" plans. A Ministry of Defence spokesman confirmed that discussions had begun between police and army.

British Telecom has already spent £350 million to safeguard its services, and Railtrack is spending a further £150 million to prevent rail disruption.

The possibility of riots and civil unrest has been mooted in the official cabinet committee to deal with the millennium bug crisis, which is chaired by Margaret Beckett, but has not yet been considered in detail.

Earlier this month the Government announced the relaunch of its £1 million attempt to train 20,000 "bug-busters" from small companies to help them become "2000 compliant". So far only 300 people have signed up.

Experts have warned that computers could crash at midnight on Friday, December 31, 1999, because many systems only recognise the last two digits in years and cannot cope with the double zero in 2000.

The Department of Transport has already talked of banning some flights from Third World airlines to the UK because of expected computer-related problems in developing countries.

Mr Evans also said that all police leave would be cancelled over the four-day extended Millennium bank holiday next year to ensure that forces were up to strength.

Civil emergency defence planners have long been used to coping with possible "doomsday scenarios", with many local authorities having established plans to restore essential services in the event of a nuclear attack.

These days, the police, fire, ambulance and medical services are more used to staging annual events to test their readiness in the event of an emergency such as an air crash.



Subject and author... Monica Lewinsky 'said yes immediately' to the suggestion that Andrew Morton should collaborate on her memoirs

Her True Story: The chemistry's right as Monica and Andrew strike a \$1 million deal

Michael Ellison
In New York

IT WAS, apparently, the strong personal chemistry between Monica Lewinsky and her visitor that did the trick. "We put the two of them together in a New York hotel room and she said yes immediately," according to one of her admirers.

From that point the result was inevitable — a book deal. The former White House intern has agreed to have Andrew Morton, master chronicler of prominent women's misery, write her memoirs in an agreement that will earn at least \$1 million between them.

"It wasn't the money, she could have got much higher prices elsewhere," said

British publisher Michael O'Mara. This was despite the fact that American publishers have spent months falling over each other to deny any interest, publicly at least, in buying up the story of Ms Lewinsky's affair with President Clinton.

"Monica is an intelligent, well-spoken, average American girl, not the foolish bimbo that the press paints her as," said Mr O'Mara, chairman of Michael O'Mara Books.

Whether her behaviour last week confirms or contradicts this view is open to question. Then, she started screaming at fellow diners and waiters in Gino's, a New York restaurant frequented by movie stars and politicians, when an elderly man laughed at her.

The publication of Monica's Story, some time be-

tween February and next summer, is expected to coincide with an interview by Barbara Walters on the ABC television network, the first by the woman who has been branded "the portly peeper" by one New York tabloid. She would not be paid by ABC but would be able to cash in on the foreign rights.

Mr Morton, a former Daily Star royal correspondent, has already conducted several interviews with 24-year-old Ms Lewinsky, who felt humiliated and threatened by independent counsel Kenneth Starr in front of the grand jury.

As author of the most authoritative biography of the late Princess of Wales, Mr Morton has vast experience in dealing with put-upon women.

Diana: Her True Story

was the first to reveal the full extent of the princess's unhappiness when it was published in 1992. But it was the revised version, Diana: Her Own Story — In Her Own Words, which came out after her death last year, which caused the real storm, revealing the full extent of her co-operation by printing transcripts of taped interviews.

Mr Morton is said to have been granted "exclusive and unrestricted access" to Ms Lewinsky and her family.

"The real Monica Lewinsky is a very different person from the one people have read about in the press, and Andrew is the ideal author to redress the balance," said Mr O'Mara. "I feel confident this book will be a worldwide bestseller."

North American rights have been sold to St Martin's Press for what is said to be another seven-figure sum. Simon & Schuster, which published both versions of Mr Morton's previous book, were one of the several to decline to bid for a Lewinsky tell-all. It is thought that the publishing house's attitude was coloured by its agreement to publish a Hillary Clinton book about pets.

But the public will not have to wait until next year before hearing Ms Lewinsky's voice for the first time. The so-called Linda Tripp telephone tapes, in which the affair was revealed, will be released today. "You are going to get both of them after you've heard them prattling on," said one White House commentator.

'We want Saddam gone . . . but I don't think the US can kill him'

Maggie O'Kane in Baghdad finds cracks in the terrified rhetoric of public loyalty



IN a house in the suburbs of Baghdad, a Ba'ath party apparition showered for 30 minutes and then changed into a deep pink shirt and black trousers for the opening of the

French Film Festival in the al-Rashid theatre in the city centre. Any irony in one title, *Walk to the Gallows*, passed him by.

In al-Amarah — 300 miles from the capital — a dozen of his comrades from Iraq's

ruling party were buried three days ago. Their executioners were a desperate band of opponents of Saddam Hussein's regime, emboldened by talk of imminent Western air strikes. Their resistance in Amarah, an Iraqi city near the Iranian border, was bolstered by arms from Baghdad's long-term enemy, Iran.

The resistance had begun just as it did in February, with threats of foreign air raids encouraging the regime's battered opponents. In February, the centre of the uprising was in the city of Babylon, where the internal bloodletting "would have been worse

down Saddam Hussein" began appearing on the streets.

On the day that the United Nations secretary-general, Kofi Annan, arrived to broker peace in that earlier crisis, six Ba'ath party members were shot dead leaving a Babylon football ground where they had been training the so-called "people's army".

This time, says a Ba'ath party member who cannot be named, "I am certain there would have been an uprising if the [Western] attack had happened this weekend." Except, he adds, the internal bloodletting "would have been worse

... I know the guy across the street hates me for being in the party and this time it would have been very bloody."

No one knows how many died in the 16 days of upsurge of popular defiance and the official counter-attack after the Gulf war. The dead were buried in their gardens because of the chaos in the streets. All around Babylon, even today, are miles and miles of black stalks where loyal Republican Guard units scorched the palm plantations of the rebels.

"Of course we want to see him gone," says one man of his president. "I used to be-

lieve that the Americans knew where to get him and kill him but now I don't think they can. So instead they threaten to bomb the power station and that only hurts us — the rich drink mineral water."

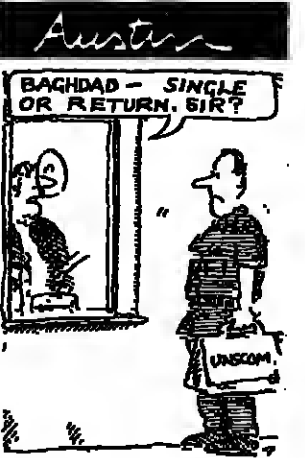
But publicly, on the streets of the capital, the pro-Saddam rhetoric and terrified expressions of loyalty persist.

The director of Baghdad Zoo, Hisham Mohammed, explains patiently how Monica Lewinsky and Paula Jones were part of a Zionist conspiracy to force President Clinton to bomb Iraq. Dr Mohammed, aged

42, one of the country's leading veterinarians, spent 12 years fighting on the front during the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s.

He lost one uncle and three cousins. His wife lost two brothers. He has spent the last seven years watching his animals dying from viral and respiratory infections because vaccines are few due to the international sanctions in force against Iraq since its Gulf war defeat by the US-led alliance.

He, like most Iraqis, is philosophical and helpless turn to page 2, column 3



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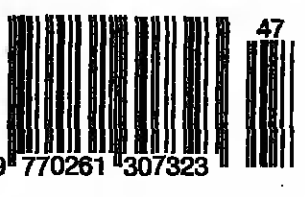
UK news

Agirl of 17 who suffered brain damage during a routine operation was awarded £3.9 million.
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A Bosnian Muslim officer was acquitted of commanding a torture camp for Serbs.
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In G2 Europe today: A project which alerts primary school children to the dangers of drug addiction

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Sketch

Passions stirred by man in tights



Simon Hoggart

IRAQ could still be bombed to smithereens. Britain's farmers face destitution. Diseased miners are dying by the score.

The House of Lords was to debate all those yesterday. But first it had to settle one far more crucial matter: the Lord Chancellor's tights. In the event, Lord Irvine got his way by 145 votes to 115, and will now appear in full drag only on ceremonial occasions.

The sheer wondrous weirdness of the British constitution was summed up by the sight of his lordship in full-bottomed wig, black gown, knee-breeches, silver-buckled shoes and tights, listening in silence to a debate about whether he would be able to divest himself of these garments, depending on what he was up to at the time.

It would have cheered things up if he'd grabbed the wig with both hands and screamed "Get it off me! I can't stand it any more! Aaaaaah!" But he simply sat there with a sort of calm, post-prandial smile on his face.

The peers were debating a report from the Committee on Procedure, which had decided — just — to recommend the Full Monty solution, as the Lord Chancellor had asked.

(The committee also rescinded its recommendation that Lords should not be allowed to speak with their hands in their pockets. What ever next? They'll be allowed to speak with their mouths full, or eat with their elbows on the table.)

Lord Bingham, the committee chairman, said that "robust views" had been expressed in committee. "Even these modest proposals were met by strong dissent," he revealed.

If he had been describing a summit meeting, this would have translated as: "It was all we could do to stop them straggling each other with piano wire." In House of Lords speak, however, it might merely mean that two members had woken up. He said that after this "forthright" de-

bate there had been no vote, "but there was a majority, not a very large majority, perhaps a bare majority, but a majority nonetheless, in support of the proposed changes". Peers tend to talk like this. It makes them feel, well, peerish.

Lord Ferrers, a Tory, spoke against the changes, though he acknowledged that the Lord Chancellor had promised to keep his ordinary shoes "well-polished". That was a relief. Some of the more suspicious Tories might have been expecting trainers.

The matter was, Lord Ferrers implied, nothing to do with Derry Irvine himself. It was a matter of the "stature, the dignity and indeed the awe in which the office of Lord Chancellor is held".

You couldn't have temporary holders of the job saying "I don't like this," any more than a Guards officer could say: "I don't like silly old bear-skins." Or a strip club visitor in Sobo leave his dirty mac behind merely because it didn't look like rain. (He didn't actually say the last bit, but I gave it to him to beef up his argument.)

Lord Strabolgi, one of the few Labour hereditaries, spoke in favour of change.

"My Lords, we must move with the times," he said. In the Upper House this is daring, revolutionary talk, and there was a low groundswell of grumbling dissent from the Conservatives.

In a cool, refreshingly well-informed speech, Lord Lester, a Liberal Democrat, pointed out that wigs and knee-breeches arrived long after the first Lord Chancellors. Or, as he put it: "The antiquity of his dress does not match the antiquity of his office."

Lord Ackner, a cross-bench lawyer, affected legal humour. "It may be the horsehair which is preventing him from answering the question, 'Why are you going back on so many of the promises you made in opposition?'"

The theory that deadly wigs are making the Government go back on its promises was a new one to the peers, most of whom looked puzzled by it. Baroness Young (C) also asked where it would all end. "We could come here in jeans and T-shirts, which appear to be national costume now."

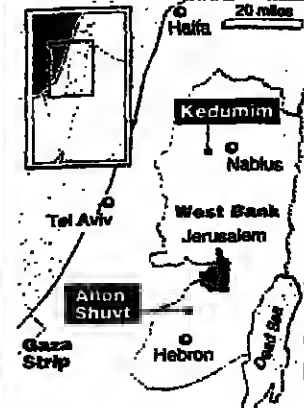
The thought of the Baroness in a light-fitting, possibly wet, T-shirt was too much for many of the peers, who had to leave for restorative tea and cakes.

Summit timetable aborted amid mutual threats □ Sharon urges the seizure of more Arab land

Israel halts army pullout



Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, tells parliament yesterday: 'The Palestinians will test us every day'



'Grab more hills. Whatever is seized will be ours. Whatever isn't seized will end up in their hands'

Ariel Sharon, Israeli defence minister

David Sharrock in Jerusalem

ISRAEL yesterday suspended its commitment to give territory back to the Palestinians, saying that their leader, Yasser Arafat, must first publicly retract a pledge to declare statehood next May.

The announcement came as the country's foreign minister, Ariel Sharon, urged Jewish settlers to grab more West Bank land to keep it out of Palestinian hands.

"Everyone should take action, should run, should grab more hills. We'll expand the area. Whatever is seized will be ours. Whatever isn't seized will end up in their hands. That's the way it will be... That's what must be

done now," Mr Sharon told a political gathering late on Sunday.

His comments — also broadcast on radio — were quickly followed by an announcement in parliament by the prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, that the army's withdrawal from part of the West Bank, due to start yesterday, was being suspended.

These declarations are the latest hostilities in the war of words that has raged ever since Mr Arafat and Mr Netanyahu signed a "land-for-peace" pact in late October, after talks at the Wye River plantation in Maryland brokered by the United States.

The accord envisaged Israel withdrawing from 13 per cent of the West Bank over a three-

month period to be completed by the end of January. Both sides had pledged to avoid "unilateral actions", but Israel has announced that construction of a big new Jewish neighbourhood in annexed east Jerusalem will begin — a move that was condemned by Washington.

Over the weekend, Mr Arafat told Palestinian supporters at a West Bank rally that he would declare a Palestinian state on May 4, when the five-year-old Oslo interim accords expire.

Mr Arafat added that Jerusalem would be the capital and that "our rifle is ready" to defend the city, which has been entirely in Israeli hands since the 1967 war. Around 200,000 Palestinians live in east Jerusalem.

Mr Netanyahu, in a speech frequently interrupted by hecklers, told the Knesset yesterday: "I do not intend to implement any withdrawal under these circumstances... until these things are corrected in public."

As the Israeli parliament began a two-day debate on the Wye accord, the prime minister added that he would reconvene his cabinet tomorrow to review the suspension of the withdrawal. On Sunday evening, Israeli and Palestinian negotiators had agreed that Israel would pull back from 2 per cent of the West Bank by the weekend.

In spite of this latest delay, it is still likely that the Wye agreement will be implemented. The terms are assured the support of some 90

of 120 Knesset members and Mr Netanyahu's speech was mainly aimed at hardliners who have threatened to topple his coalition.

Portraying himself as a tough negotiator, Mr Netanyahu said: "The Palestinians will test us every day and we will stand firm."

One Arafat adviser, Ahmed Tibi, responded that the Israeli prime minister was "trying to avoid and escape implementation".

Yesterday Jewish settlers from Kedumim, five miles west of the main Arab city of Nablus in the West Bank, attempted to set up two trailers on a hilltop.

statements: "We understood that the attitude of the Israeli government is that he who holds the land determines policy and we are acting accordingly."

The settlers were later removed by Israeli police, but said they would be returning. Before his Knesset speech Mr Netanyahu called Mr Arafat to seek clarifications of his weekend comments, but said he was not satisfied with the answers he got.

But in an attempt to soften their leader's words, two senior Arafat aides said the Palestinians were committed to the Wye accord and that talk about statehood in May was intended to prod Israel so that negotiations on a permanent peace agreement would not drag on.

Review

Murky motives in Malesville

Lyn Gardner

The Black Dahlia
Dorby Playhouse

THERE can be few more bleak dedications than the one that James Ellroy gave to his novel *The Black Dahlia* — "Mother: 29 years later, this validation in blood."

Genevieve Hultker Ellroy's body had been found dumped in the bushes in a sleazy area of LA in 1948, when her son, James, was just 10.

The actual inspiration of *The Black Dahlia* was another unsolved murder, that of Elisabeth Short in the 1940s. The silent spectre of that death hangs over Mike Alfreds' stage adaptation just as surely as the dead Short, her bloodless body mutilated, haunts LA police officer Bucky Bleichert and his partner Leland Blanchard.

There are other demons too: Blanchard is still fixated on the disappearance of his kid sister many years before. In Ellroy's twilight world, women tend to be dead, absent or double-crossing vixens. This is Malesville writ large.

The question hanging over Alfreds' adaptation is not how he has done it, but why? From the opening scenes in the LA police academy gym, in which strung-out Bucky and tortured Blanchard square up for a boxing match, Alfreds' production captures exactly the right atmosphere of creeping corruption and weary cynicism.

Nobody is innocent here, certainly not the eager Bucky, who started down the slippery slope when he shopped his for-

mer friends to get his police badge, and who finds himself in free-fall when he gets involved in the Short murder investigation, itself being used to further the political ambitions of police department chiefs.

What is interesting about the evening is that you are never quite sure whether the corruption comes entirely from external sources or is an integral part of the flawed psyches of these men with their messed-up lives.

Or to put it another way: does the job pollute, or does it attract those whose souls are already tarnished?

Alfreds' production is as agile as the boxers in the ring. Just as hard-hitting, and it is played with a fierce, nimble intensity by an ensemble of 35 on an ingenious set by Peter McKintosh.

It is undeniably gripping, even if, at three hours plus, it is overlong and pretty complicated in the plotting department.

But however well it is done — and that is very well indeed — I wonder whether it really tells us anything new about a world that has already been covered by movies from Chinatown to LA Confidential.

There is also the violence. In its graphic, stomach-turning descriptions of female degradation and mutilation, it tells us rather more than is necessary. It's not that I don't want to know, but that I already do.

The locker door that swings open with a shock to reveal the murderer's secret stash of pickled human innards is art; the description of poor Elisabeth Short's terrible, tortured end is pornography.

£135bn tobacco payout

US manufacturers in deal to buy off legal threat to future profits

Lisa Buckingham and Mark Tran in New York

THE world's most powerful cigarette manufacturers yesterday agreed to pay \$135 billion (£106 billion) in an attempt to dispose of the most potent legal threat to their future profits.

The deal is the largest industrial settlement ever secured and will force the tobacco giants to stop advertising to young people and to fund a raft of anti-smoking measures.

White House spokesman Joe Lockhart said President Clinton saw the settlement as "an important step in the fight to reduce teen smoking."

Despite the size of the com-

passation — which involves an initial payment of \$12 billion and 25 yearly instalments — shares soared in cigarette groups such as Philip Morris, maker of Marlboro, R.J. Reynolds, whose brands include Camel, and British American Tobacco, maker of Lucky Strike. The deal also included Lorillard Tobacco.

Investors are relieved that the threat of damaging legal action, which costs the industry more than \$1 billion a year in lawyers' charges, has been ringfenced.

The industry still faces the threat that tobacco will be regulated by the Food and Drug Administration.

The eventual size of the pay-out will depend on how many US states sign up to the

deal. So far eight of the states have agreed to the package. Another 30 are expected to sign up by the end of the week, although the refusal to agree by more than two or three states could scupper the entire package.

By silencing the largest suits, tobacco companies also hope to dampen the chances that litigation will spread to other countries.

Executives believe the price is worth paying to buy some industrial peace. It will allow them to concentrate on rapidly growing territories, such as China.

Public health advocates declined to recommend whether the states should embrace the settlement. Diane Canova, speaking for the American Heart Association, said federal legislation was still needed to give the Food and Drug Administration authority over tobacco products.

'We want Saddam gone'

continued from page one when it comes to his country's fate. He has spent a lifetime watching his relatives and animals die. "It's in God's hands. The United States is strong and powerful but God is stronger. It is He who is sending hurricanes, typhoons and floods to the Americas. That is their punishment for what they are doing to us."

Two miles away in the Canal Hotel, painted in the blue and white colours of the United Nations, the three-storey building awaits the arrival of the UN weapons inspectors, due to fly in later today. It was President Saddam's decision to cease any co-operation with the inspec-

tors that prompted the latest Western threat to bomb Iraq. In the capital yesterday, at the end of a lingering summer, they never knew how close such punitive action had come when Washington suspended the operation at the weekend.

But having twice come to the brink of attack this year, people are reduced to fatigue and indifference.

"It's no big deal. Nobody even mentioned it at school. We've got used to it," says 16-year-old Samir Fahim.

Her father, Adnan, a composer and orchestral director is equally nonchalant: "They've bombed us before and they bombed Vietnam for years. The Vietnamese kept

them out of Vietnam and we'll keep the Americans out."

At the zoo, Dr Mohammed is more preoccupied about how to get his most important animal, his Siberian tiger, Mandura, back from the hiding place where he was put in case of bombing.

Mandura, he says, is "the oldest, the cleverest and meanest survivor of the war". All his offspring have died from infection and malnutrition, except one hardy son.

"He's much cleverer than the lion," Dr Mohammed says. "The problem is that every time we catch him or try to move him we have to find a new tactic, because he always seems to know what we are going to do."

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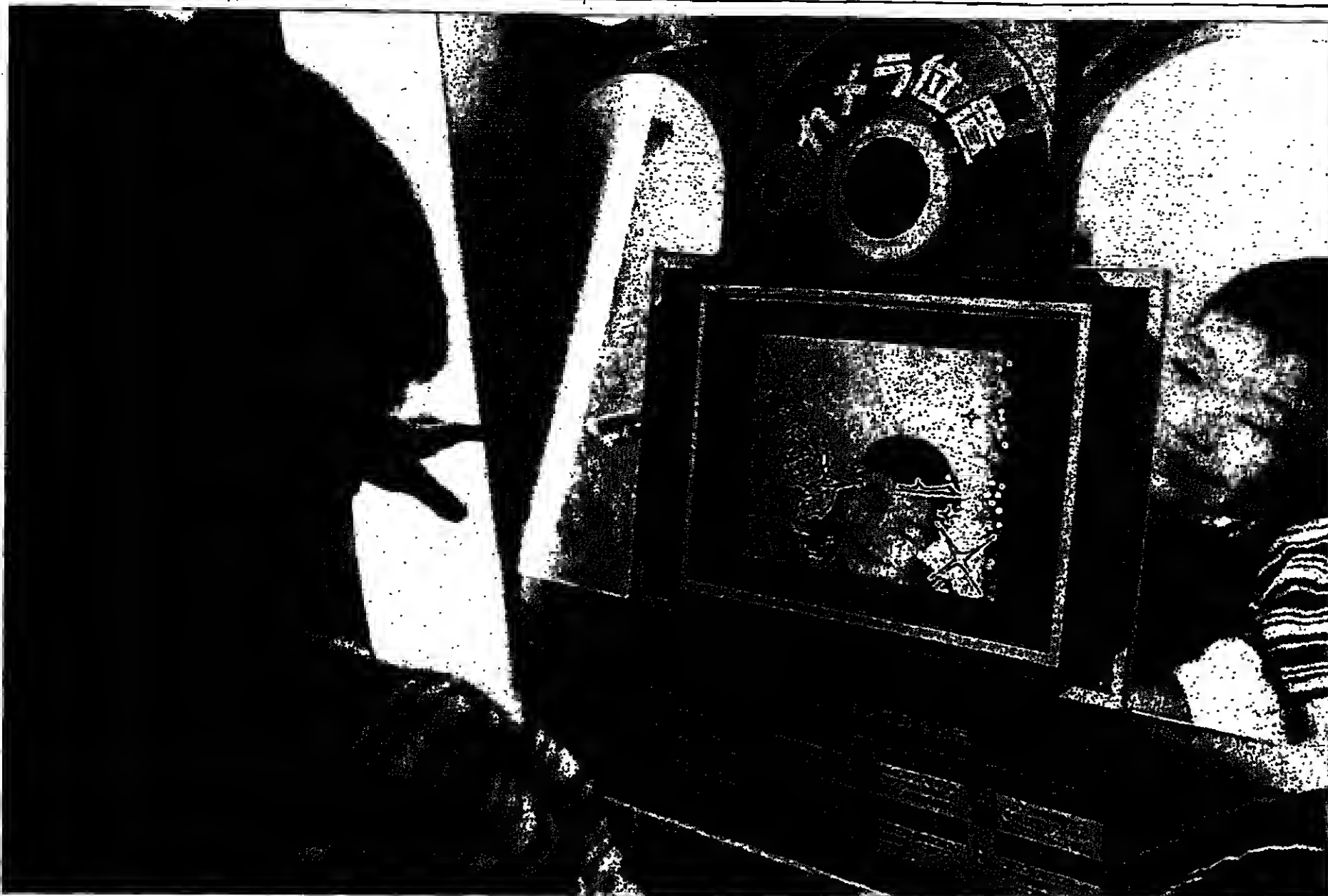
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Happy days are here... the government's decision means that Japanese children will be quids in, and so, it is hoped, will be makers of video games

Japanese children told: here's some extra spending money and don't save a single yen

Jonathan Watts
in Tokyo

JAPANESE toy and video game makers were rubbing their hands with glee yesterday as the government decided to give children cash hand-outs in its latest attempt to get the nation spending.

As part of a record £118 billion economic stimulus package, Tokyo plans to hand out about £100 in shopping vouchers to 35 million people — including everyone under the age of 16 and over the age of 64.

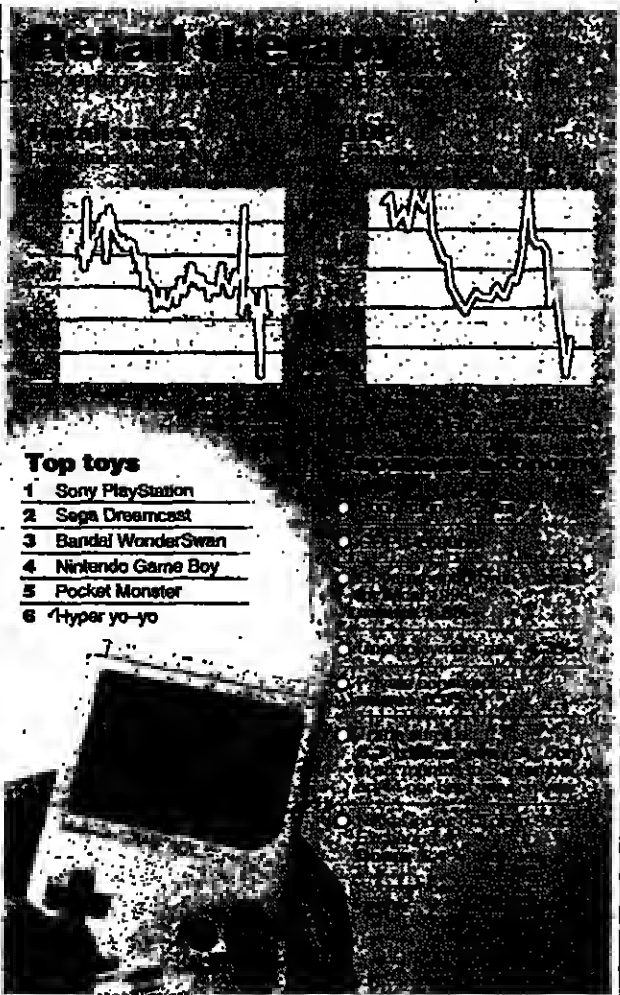
The decision to issue the coupons, which must be spent within six months, follows the failure of more conventional methods to boost consumption. A special tax cut in April, for example, made little impact on the economy because anxious adults squirreled the windfall away in savings accounts.

Children, however, can be expected to take their responsibilities to spend more seriously, not least because the money should arrive soon after the tochi dama (new year's gift) season — traditionally a busy time for toy retailers.

According to interviews on the TBS network, many young Japanese already have their eyes on ski-boards and video games.

That is good news for Bandai, Sony and Sega — all three of which are planning to launch new game machines in the next few months — but not everybody is happy about the new scheme.

Consumer groups complain that the government is foster-



Top toys

- 1 Sony PlayStation
- 2 Sega Dreamcast
- 3 Bandai WonderSwan
- 4 Nintendo Game Boy
- 5 Pocket Monster
- 6 Hyper yo-yo

ing an unhealthy materialism among young people. Retailers are worried about forgeries. And Japan's large community of Korean residents is up in arms because

have little effect on spending because parents will use them to buy daily necessities and save the equivalent in cash.

The prime minister, Keizo Obuchi, however, has accepted the scheme as the political price he has to pay for the parliamentary support of New Komeito, the opposition party that first floated the coupon idea.

The finance minister, Kiichi Miyazawa, said the government was willing to explore every possibility to drag Japan out of recession. Last month, for example, parliament passed the "Happy Monday" law, which created two new three-day weekends in the hope that consumers will use the prolonged leisure time to spend more.

Such bizarre measures are a sign of stimulus fatigue. In the past seven years, Japan has adopted seven major pump-priming measures — usually a combination of public spending and tax cuts — to try to jump-start the economy, but without much success.

Unemployment is at a record high and Japan's gross domestic product is expected to decline by 1.8 per cent during the current financial year. Underlining the problems, the government announced yesterday that bankruptcies rose for the 22nd consecutive month in October, while steel production declined by 11 per cent compared with last year.

According to Toshiaki Sakai, head of the Economic Planning Agency, yesterday's stimulus package — the third this year — will put Japan back on a path toward growth in 1999.

As well as the coupon plan, the key spending commitments are £39.5 billion in infrastructure investment, £30 billion in corporate and income tax cuts, and £29.5 billion in funds for businesses hit by the credit crunch.

Investors, however, gave the package only a tepid welcome, saying it contained few surprises. Despite the news, the yen was little changed against the dollar and the Nikkei index of the Tokyo stock market made only modest gains.

Analysts said disappointment focused on the absence of plans to reverse the April 1997 hike in the consumption tax, Japan's VAT, to 5 per

cent — a move that is widely blamed for triggering the current recession.

Supermarket chains have recently had great success with "5 per cent consumption tax sales".

Yesterday, however, Mr Obuchi dismissed such calls, insisting that the government's existing stimulus package was "timely and effective".

In a nationally televised address, he told the nation: "We want to demonstrate to the world our determination to put our economy back on track" — a sentiment that Japanese children will no doubt share in the coming months.

Lib Dems may vote on Labour link-up

Michael White
Political Editor

THE Liberal Democrat leadership was last night edging towards a ballot of all party members to resolve tensions between Paddy Ashdown and his critics over the party's relationship with Labour.

After the turbulent weekend which followed last week's joint statement of co-operation with Tony Blair, Mr Ashdown was last night facing the Lib Dems' federal executive in an emergency meeting at Westminster.

He told them they had a "great opportunity" to campaign for proportional representation (PR) at Westminster as a result of the Jenkins report and to "practise the kind of politics we preach. You cannot argue or indeed campaign for PR and object to the cooperative style of politics which it will usher in."

Though the sentiment is hard for Liberal Democrats to dispute in theory, practice is different. Given the vehemence of some criticism it was widely predicted that Mr Ashdown would have to face a special conference in the new year, convened by activists who fear that the party's ideology is at risk if it gets lured into closer partnership with Labour.

But Mr Ashdown, who believes that such cooperation is inevitable to achieve the Lib Dem goal of electoral reform, was suspected of preferring a party ballot as the most decisive, quicker and cheaper option.

It could be completed before Christmas — leaving the Lib Dems united, one way or another, to face a string of elections in 1999.

Mr Ashdown is upbeat and likely to get his way. But the authorised version of the latest Tony and Paddy act — that it arose spontaneously from the aftermath of the Jenkins report — is being questioned by senior colleagues. They do not believe their leader was as threatened by outright Labour hostility to the report as has been suggested. "I think the planning

for this had been in hand for some time," said one.

"Paddy's a great man for momentum. I think he had brought the Prime Minister to a certain view and didn't want him to go away and have second thoughts. He wanted to strike while the iron was hot."

Either way, party strategists are desperate to get the current row out of the way as soon as possible and yesterday allies, including deputy leader Alan Beith, rallied to his support.

Complaining that last week's statement, which caught most Labour and Lib Dem MPs on the hop, was misunderstood, Mr Beith said it was partly a continuation of existing arrangements on constitutional reform.

It could also extend discussion into other policy areas where the two parties agree, though these would not be whole subject areas, such as health and education, but particular policies and projects "where there is enough agreement to make it worthwhile. We shall continue to fight pretty hard in areas of disagreement."

Criticism of Mr Ashdown's growing intimacy with Mr Blair, very much a personal relationship, is matched on the Labour side, at national and local level where hostility between councillors and activists varies in different parts of the country. It matters less to Labour because it is so much the larger party.

In the South, where the Tories were, until the Tory election disaster, the dominant political force and common enemy, relations are easier except in cities where Lib Dems and Labour compete directly for votes — such as Simon Hughes's inner-London seat in the former Labour stronghold of North South-west and Bournemouth.

There are similar tensions in his northern cities such as Sheffield and Liverpool.

In his speech in the federal executive Mr Ashdown stressed last night: "This is not about pulling our punches. We will oppose vigorously where we disagree with the Government."

Knives out for top fur shop clients

Activists target customers of royal furrier on stolen database

Arnold Gantleman

ANIMAL rights activists last night threatened a campaign of harassment against fur-wearing members of the aristocracy following the apparent theft of the royal furrier's client database.

Prominent customers of Calman Links have already been targeted by activists after the shop's client list was distributed among militant anti-fur protesters.

Police were last night investigating how their addresses and telephone numbers came to be in the hands of campaigners. Customers named on the leaked list voiced mounting alarm as activists warned them they could expect to be individually targeted.

Calman Links, London, supplies furs to the Queen and the Queen Mother; the customer list circulated by Fur-Free London includes lords, ladies and courtesans — and gives precise details of the type and quantity of fur they have bought or had



Fur game: A week of action against the trade began yesterday

repaired at the shop. One of the most militant groups to have received the list, the Animal Liberation Front, warned of direct action against some people on the list. "Anyone who would be perceived as a high profile fur wearer would be seen as a legitimate target for the ALF, in as much as their property and equipment could possibly be targeted," a spokesman said.

But personal attacks would be out of the question. Activists have used the list to send a hoax bankruptcy notice concerning the firm to at least 50 customers. In the letter, Calman Links appears to make an abject apology for

internal source. "We do not know how the information was obtained and the whole issue is in the hands of the police. In due course we will write to all our customers to reassure them and apologise for the inconvenience."

Jan Brown, a British Fur Trade spokeswoman, had been called in to help handle the crisis. She insisted that the leak had not come from the shop or its five staff. "This is clearly an attempt to intimidate clients," she said.

Fur-Free London spokesman Paul Jones said: "We have the names, addresses and telephone numbers of every one of their customers, including lords and ladies. It has been circulated around the animal rights movement. We're not suggesting anyone does anything illegal, just sends letters or calls them."

A spokesman for the Coalition to Abolish the Fur Trade, which also has the list, added: "Anyone on this list should be thinking very hard about the fur trade and their involvement in it."

One of those on the list, Betty Ford, from south London, said last night: "I think these animal rights activists should all be shot. They do more harm than good. Fur is the most becoming thing a woman can wear, but at the moment you cannot wear it because public opinion is so strongly against it."



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Source: Moneyfacts as at 10/98. Shows examples of the monthly premiums applying to companies quoted, level term assurance (£100,000 life cover), assuming acceptance as ordinary (non-smoker) rates. Premiums vary with terms, sums assured, age, sex and smoker status.

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Role models



ELIZABETH I
Elizabeth was born in Greenwich on September 7 1533 into an eccentric Tudor family. Her childhood was marked by danger; her father, Henry, had her mother, Anne Boleyn, executed and many stepmothers later she was imprisoned by her sister Mary in the Tower of London. She became Queen in 1558 after the death of Mary.



JANE AUSTEN
Austen was born on December 16 1775 in the Hampshire village of Steventon where her father was a rector. She was the seventh child of a family of eight: six boys and two girls. She used her unconventional upbringing in an extensive network of relationships by blood and friendship for the settings, characters and subject matter of her novels.



CHERIE BOOTH
Booth was born in Liverpool on September 23 1954, one of seven daughters. Her father Tony an actor in *Till Death Do Us Part*, was rarely at home. She was brought up as a good Catholic girl by her mother Gale, a former actress, and her Booth grandparents.

Research: Maryvonne Grellier, F&I

Lone parents 'can produce happy children'

Head praises traditional family values but claims 'the reality is that that will not always be possible'

Rebecca Smithers
Education Correspondent

SINGLE parents can bring up children just as well as traditional families, the leader of independent girls' schools said yesterday.

There were plenty of "happy, well-adjusted" people around — including the Prime Minister's wife Cherie Booth — who did not have a conventional upbringing.

In her opening address to 300 members of the Girls' School Association at its annual conference in Glas-

gow, president Jackie Anderson questioned the idealisation of the family by the current and previous governments.

The green paper this month rightly emphasised the desirability of traditional family values, said Mrs Anderson, headmistress of King's High School, Warwick. But, she added: "The reality is that that will not always be possible."

As well as Cherie Booth — who was looked after by her grandmother from the age of six weeks — there were many successful historical figures such as Elizabeth I and novel-

ist Jane Austen who were not brought up in conventional two-parent families.

Cherie Booth's mother Gale had to go out to work when she and her two small daughters were abandoned by her husband, actor Tony Booth.

Mrs Anderson, herself married for 35 years, said Elizabeth I was "a highly successful leader whose home life offered a series of role models who taught her how to avoid following in their footsteps".

More seriously, Jane Austen benefited from an extended family where her brother was happily brought up by his aunt and uncle.

Mrs Anderson told the head teachers that a loving stable relationship made children resilient to long-term damage despite the inevitable trauma of their parents' break-up.

"One person can be sufficient to nurture a well-balanced individual," she said. "I realise that grandmas are in short supply, either pursuing their own careers or far distant, but family friends and neighbours can be a great support to a child."

Mrs Anderson, whose grandmother played a major role in her upbringing, said fathers could ease the pain of a break-up by keeping in touch with their daughters via phone, post and even E-mail. She conceded that absent fathers often became "fantasy figures" for teenage daughters, held up as perfect parents despite their limited role in their lives. Boys went off the rails "spectacularly" as a result of divorce, but girls coped much better, albeit with some loss of self-esteem.

Long suffering single moth-

ers should be praised rather than pilloried. "If you look at it, it tends to be mothers who try to do a job and look after the children as well. They feel failures because their marriage has gone wrong, and I don't see any point in harping on about that. We must be positive and move forward."

Speaking at the start of European Drugs Prevention Week, Mrs Anderson said drug culture was now part of society and had to be tackled because of its potentially devastating impact.

"It is not a problem confined to the inner cities," she said. "In an increasingly wealthy conscious society, all children and sometimes from a disturbingly young age, are vulnerable to the transitory thrill of drugs, which are as available in every town and village as chewing gum —

perhaps more so if the village shop has closed."

The School Standards Minister, Estelle Morris, urged head teachers not to automatically expel children found to be using drugs at school. It was important for schools to strike the right balance between punishment and welfare. Exclusion should be automatic for drug trafficking.

Miss Morris also announced new cash help of £22.5 million over the next three years to help schools and youth services teach children about drugs.

The Secondary Heads Association later warned that the advice — to be published in New Drugs Guidance for Schools tomorrow — sent out the wrong signals about the acceptability of drugs to both teachers and parents.

Gunman gets four life terms

A MAN was jailed for life yesterday after shooting a policeman, killing a police dog and then turning the gun on his ex-girlfriend.

Adam Willmott, aged 33, was given four life sentences at Oxford crown court after admitting the attacks. The court heard that he had had his firearms certificate returned in 1995 after a previous conviction for holding an other girlfriend hostage at gunpoint, when he also shot at a police chief inspector.

Willmott was jailed for 18 months in 1997 after admitting falsely imprisoning the woman and her boyfriend and making threats to kill.

In the latest incident, he blasted Ian Churms, a police constable and dog handler, in the knee, before hitting the German shepherd dog, Bryn, with a single shot. He then shot former girlfriend Susan Sturges in the back and thigh before she escaped to a policeman's house near Wellesborough, Northants.

Mr Justice Scott-Baker said the decision to return the firearms certificate to Willmott was a "very serious error of judgment" and a "matter of considerable disquiet".

The firearms situation had been investigated by Northamptonshire police, and the judge was assured "the most stringent rules in relation to firearms" were now in place.

Sentencing Willmott, the judge told him: "It is clear that you are in certain circumstances, as this case illustrates, unstable and potentially very dangerous. You should never have been trusted to possess a lethal weapon."

Because of his previous conviction he would be jailed for life twice on two separate counts of wounding with intent. He was also jailed for life for possessing a firearm with intent to endanger life and given another life sentence for aggravated burglary.

Willmott, a self-employed builder, also got three months for shooting the dog Bryn.

Mr Justice Scott-Baker added: "You will serve six years from today before you are considered for parole."

The court heard that Willmott, 43, after she returned home with her 20-year-old daughter from a pnh skittles match, by punching her and threatening her with a knife. She fled to the police officer's house and after the police

were alerted, went back home presuming Willmott had left the area, although he had parked just 200 yards away.

Michael Stokes, QC, prosecuting, said: "They went home thinking the traumatic events were over but in reality they were just beginning."

Within minutes Willmott appeared at the back door with a .22 rifle, 116 rounds of ammunition and a silencer for the weapon.

Mr Stokes said: "These two women were clearly terrified. They screamed and Clara went upstairs and was banging on the window trying to attract the attention of the two police officers who were still in the street."

Willmott dragged Mrs Sturges outside and was then approached by PC Churms, who told him to drop the gun. "He was then shot quite deliberately by the defendant who hit him in the knee. PC Churms released the dog, which ran towards the defendant and Mrs Sturges. The dog appears to have got hold of her and Willmott released his grip on her. There were then two rapid shots."

One of the shots hit Mrs Sturges in the right shoulder. The other was aimed at the dog who was shot in the neck and who crawled a few inches and then died. There must have been a fourth shot because Mrs Sturges was also shot in the left thigh.

In the confusion Mrs Sturges managed to run across the road back to the home of the police officer, Pat Harris.

But Willmott then smashed in the glass of the back door of the police officer's house. PC Harris, a karate instructor, said he was "petrified and helpless" as the gunman broke in, but determined to protect his family.

As Willmott climbed the stairs, PC Harris grabbed the gun and fought with him. The rifle went off again and the pair fell down the stairs. PC Harris overpowered Willmott and he was arrested.

When detectives went to Willmott's house they found an arsenal of weapons.

Anne Rafferty, defending, told the court that Willmott was a diabetic who had been recently given the wrong prescription of insulin. "He has always felt in his heart that his behaviour that night was affected by the wrong prescription of insulin given him some weeks earlier."

Government throws lifeline to the heavily burdened farmers

Brown unveils aid package warning of shake-up for EU agriculture

James Melkio

THE Government yesterday threw a lifeline to farmers as a £120 million lifeline but warned their future could be secured only by a shake-up in European agriculture.

Nick Brown, the Agriculture Minister, unveiled an emergency aid package that will provide further subsidies for livestock farmers, particularly in the hills, and the extra use of EU funds to balance currency fluctuations.

He made clear the cash, half from the European Union, was meant to help farmers "through exceptionally difficult times" which have seen the industry sink to its worst depression since the 1930s.

Farmers' leaders welcomed the package as a safety net for some "teetering on the brink of financial collapse" while conservationists warned the help was "little more than a sticking plaster over a long-term problem".

Mr Brown accepted farmers had suffered from a marked deterioration in business as well as poor weather that had delayed the sale of their animals to an already overcrowded market.

The export ban on beef imposed by the EU in 1996 because of the BSE crisis had been followed by the collapse of export markets for sheep and pigs due to the strong pound and financial crises in Russia and the Far East.

The package comes on top of



Farmers at a cattle sale near York last year after beef sales restrictions. PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN GILES

other aid, worth £150 million, provided in recent months.

Farmers get about £2.3 billion a year through EU Common Agriculture Policy arrangements. Help with anti-BSE measures accounted for another £1.3 billion help over the last two years.

Government figures reveal average farm incomes dipped by nearly 40 per cent from £24,600 in 1996/97 to £15,000 in 1997/98 and this financial year's figures are expected to be much worse. Only cereal farmers are earning more in real terms than they were in the early 1990s, and even their incomes have dipped recently.

The hill farming initiative,

representing farmers across the north of England, says the £8,400 average income for cattle and beef farms in the hills could have dropped well below £4,000 because of the effects of the new help are felt.

Yesterday's measures could, for instance, increase payments to hill farmers with adult beef cows by about a third on 1997 levels.

Mr Brown hoped EU ministers would next week pave the way for an end to the beef export ban imposed when the then Tory government admitted a possible link between BSE in cattle and new variant CJD in humans.

The aid demonstrated the Government's commitment to rural communities but trading conditions would remain tough and the longer term future depended on reform for more competitive and sustainable agriculture.

"It must reduce the burden imposed by the Common Agriculture Policy on consumers and taxpayers and it must free resources for better targeted measures to support the rural economy and enhance the environment," Mr Brown said.

He also made it clear that ministers were keeping a close eye on the Office of Fair Trading's investigation into allegations that supermarkets

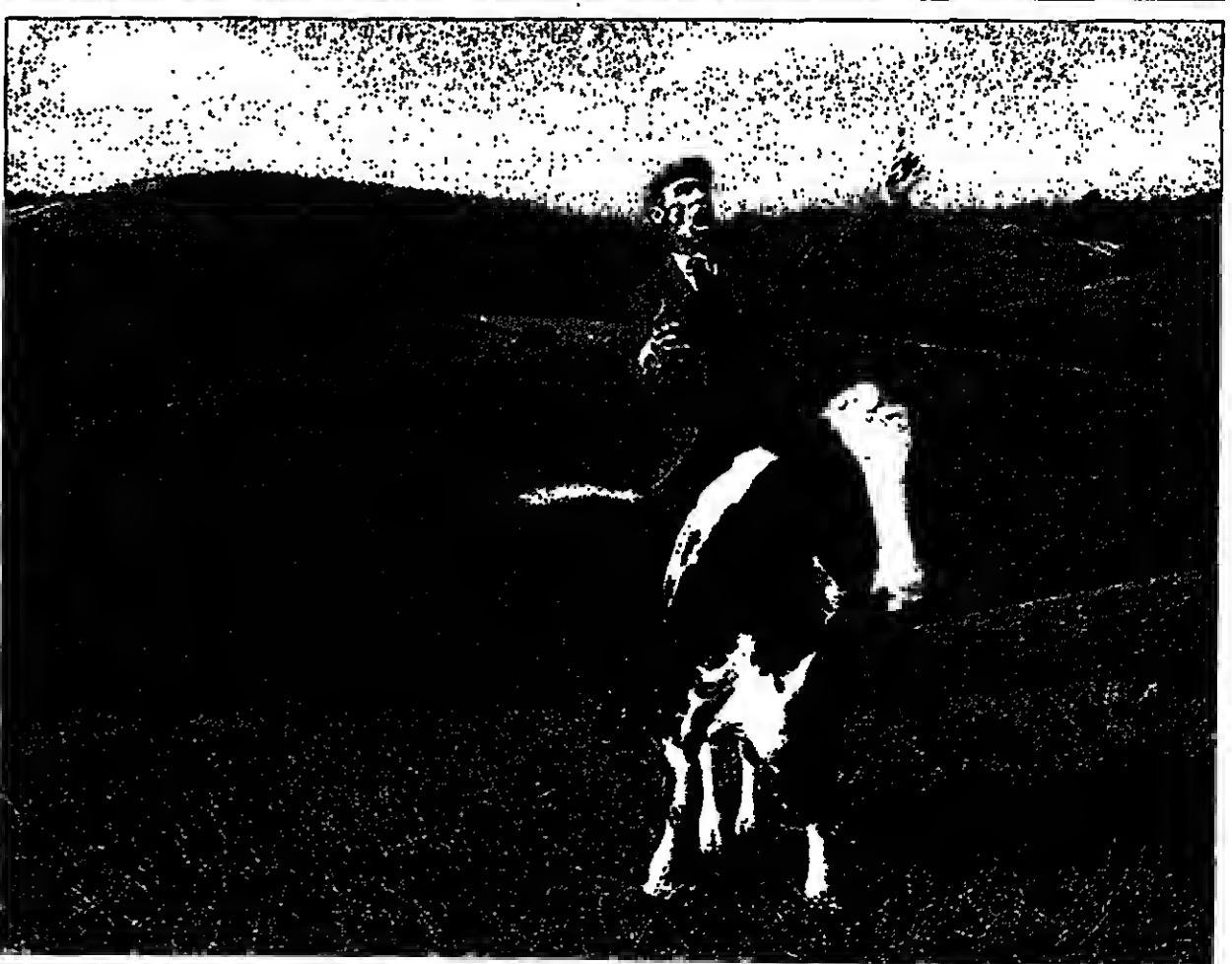
have not passed on big cuts in farm gate prices to consumers.

Tim Yeo, Opposition agriculture spokesman, welcomed the announcement. But he told Mr Brown in the Commons: "The reason this second farm rescue package in a year is needed is because the downturn in farm incomes, like the downturn in the economy, was made in Downing Street. The level of the pound during the last 18 months has been a far more important cause of falling farm incomes than the weather."

"Will you confirm the total value of this package barely matches the underspend on the agriculture budget during the last two years?" Ben Gill, president of the National Farmers' Union, said the package could not cure the ills of all farmers. "We need continued government and Bank of England action to put downward pressure on interest rates and sterling, particularly against EU currencies."

He accepted farmers needed to do more to promote their own products and co-operate in reform of EU farm policy.

The Council for the Protection of Rural England said farmers needed to be supported as "stewards of the countryside".



A shot from the advert West Country folk feel shows them as 'country bumpkins', and which the RSPCA has condemned

West Country folk go wild over TV 'yokel' ad for tinned rice pudding

Amelia Gentleman

A TELEVISION advertisement for Ambrosia's tinned rice pudding has struck a sour note with viewers in the West Country, who claim to be disgusted at its portrayal of them as country bumpkins.

The £2 million campaign features a Devon farmer riding a cow, with a reworked version of the pop song Go West, sung in a country drawl by local folk icons The Wurzels.

Claire Gordon, deputy-leader of Taunton Deane council in Somerset, last night condemned the advert as reinforcing a "yokel image" of the West Country.

She said: "It implies everybody is thick and promotes a stereotype which is not true and will not help attract jobs to the area. The yokel image is not one the council would want to promote and I don't think it's helpful to have this idea that everyone is stuck on a tractor chewing a bit of straw."

Delaney Fletcher Bozell, the agency behind the commercial, yesterday admitted it had received calls from West Country people expressing such concerns.

The advert shows a farmer in a tweed suit and flat cap astride a cow, singing the virtues of Devon and milk pudding: "Ooh-aah, it's Ambrosia". His paeon so enchants a group

of besotted city folk that they blithely follow him to the green hills of the West Country.

However, just days after its launch, the 50-second piece, commissioned by Devon-based Ambrosia manufacturers Best Foods, has already prompted fury among two interest groups.

Last week the RSPCA condemned the decision to film a cow being ridden. A spokesman warned that cows are not designed to support passengers and said the advert would encourage people to try to ride them.

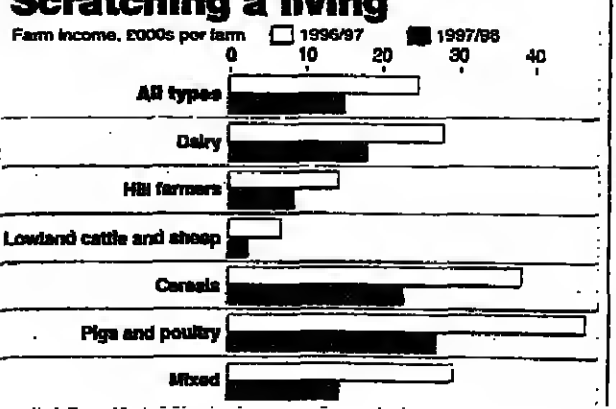
"We are very worried about the image the advert portrays to young people — they may be tempted to go

into a field, round up a cow and try to sit on her," he said. "The animal might think it is being attacked and become very distressed."

But Delaney Fletcher Bozell yesterday defended its creation. Kate Clark, account director for Ambrosia, said: "We were very sensitive to this issue, so we took an early version of the advert to the West Country and ran it past people there."

"I think some people have suffered a sense of humour failure; in no way were we being malicious. A lot of advertisements mildly take the mick out of people and we're doing no more than that. We really intended to be supportive of Devon."

Scratching a living



150



'The only way her condition could be worse would be if she was aware of her plight, but thankfully she does not have awareness. She is a very happy young woman as long as the people around her are those she trusts'

From left, Helen Edwards before and after the operation; right, her parents leaving the High Court yesterday
PHOTOGRAPH (LEFT): PAUL HACKETT



Brain-damaged girl awarded record £3.9m payout

Anaesthetist sued after slip-up during routine surgery to remove a child's birthmark 12 years ago

Nick Hopkins

A GIRL who suffered severe brain damage during a minor operation to remove a birthmark 12 years ago was awarded a record £3.9 million compensation yesterday.

The payout, believed to be the highest for a medical neg-

ligence claim against a doctor rather than a health authority, was approved by Mr Justice McKinnon at the High Court yesterday.

Helen Edwards, now 17, had a heart attack during surgery at a private nursing home in Cambridge because of complications which her parents, Roger and Brenda, blamed on the consultant anaesthetist,

Thomas Ogg. Doctors revived Helen, who was five-years-old at the time, but she was left gravely disabled. She has six full-time carers and will need round-the-clock nursing for the rest of her life.

After the hearing, Mr Edwards said: "We would rather have our daughter back as she was, rather than all the money in the world."

"The figure will seem a lot of money to most people. But Helen must pay others to facilitate her every activity 24 hours a day."

Mr and Mrs Edwards, of Elmsett near Hadleigh, Suffolk, sued Mr Ogg, claiming their daughter suffered because a tube had been incorrectly placed in her throat.

The court was told that Ms Edwards had recovered some of her faculties thanks to the devotion of her parents and the help of 70 friends from the village where they live.

Although doctors said there was no hope of improvement, Mr and Mrs Edwards sacrificed their careers as a British Telecom research technician and an accountant respectively, to give her intensive therapy devised by the Institute for Brain-Damaged Children.

The regime involved up to five people moving Helen's legs, arms and head to help stimulate her undamaged brain cells and resulted in her regaining partial sight, and being able to mutter a few words.

Mr Daniel Brennan QC, for the Edwardses, said Helen had retained "a terrific sense of fun" and praised her parents for their "unflinching devotion".

He said the way friends had rallied round the family reflected "the very best features of village life". He added: "This is a truly tragic case."

The family's solicitor, Sandra Pattoo added: "Hel-

'Fat cat' pay rises for Labour's special advisers

David Hanchin
Westminster Correspondent

TONY Blair's top three political advisers are to be paid more than members of the Cabinet under a pay deal announced yesterday by Jack Cunningham, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Top of the salary tree is the so-called drug tsar, Keith Hellawell, with £106,057 a year from December 1 — pipping the Prime Minister, who takes £105,000 a year.

Close behind are Jonathan Powell, Mr Blair's chief of staff at Downing Street, and Alastair Campbell, the Prime Minister's press secretary, who will each earn £91,014 from the same date.

All three earn more than all the rest of the Cabinet, who receive £80,087 a year — including an element of £45,066 paid from their Parliamentary salaries.

Details of the new pay ar-

rangements were released in a Parliamentary answer to Denis King, Labour MP for Bethnal Green and Bow.

The new pay rises are worth between £3,500 and £6,000 each for the top three people — way outstripping the 2.5 per cent pay rises awarded to the Cabinet. As a result, the top three advisers have for the first time overtaken their political masters in the Cabinet. They will also not be subject to a performance pay review, which is compulsory for all senior civil servants.

The other special advisers have also done well out of the deal, which followed a review ordered earlier this year.

This revealed that the remaining 67 special advisers — who cost £3.5 million a year in salaries — are to be regarded as two groups.

The Parliamentary answer — itself drafted by special advisers in Downing Street who will get the biggest rises — declines to disclose details of

who of those 67 gets what. Even details of the bands are being kept secret.

The answer reveals that the Downing Street Policy Unit awarded itself the biggest rises last July — but does not go into detail. Those said to have benefited include Mr Blair's university friend, Aul Hunter, policy guru, Geoff Mulgan, and former Social Democratic Party adviser Roger Liddle, who co-wrote the book *The Blair Revolution* with Peter Mandelson.

However the Guardian understands the three bands are £28,000-£37,000; £37,000-£52,000; and £52,000-£76,056.

Those in the top band of 17 advisers include David Miliband, head of the Downing Street Policy Unit; Ed Balls, Gordon Brown's special adviser; and Charles Whelan, Gordon Brown's press adviser.

Peter Mandelson, the Trade Secretary, has been pressing for his special adviser, Benjamin Weiss Prosser, to join that elite.

The middle band includes advisers like Ed Owen, who advises Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, and Ian Mackenzie, who advises Ann Taylor, the Chief Whip.

Those at the bottom — who get some of the biggest percentage rises, averaging 6.7

per cent, include Tom Greatrex, adviser to Nick Brown, the agricultural minister, and Andrew Lippin, who advises Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary.

Last night Tory party chairman Michael Ancram condemned the top pay levels given to Mr Blair's senior advisers as "Labour's new fat cats". He said: "The newly published salary structure for special advisers shows where the real power lies in Labour."

"It is with the unaccountable army of political henchmen who have been brought in to government at the taxpayers' expense."

"The number of these special advisers has doubled under Labour and the salary bill has soared. Some are paid more than cabinet ministers and even the Prime Minister."

"They are New Labour's fat cats. The Prime Minister told his party that when they got into government they were not there to enjoy the trappings of power. He has an interesting definition of 'trappings'."

"This band of political courtiers obviously don't care," Mr Ancram said. "The Prime Minister should make clear the pay arrangements for the whole army of political staff at Downing Street and elsewhere in Whitehall."

Comedy awards wipe smile off ITV

Janine Gibson
Media Correspondent

THE BBC has cleaned up in the nominations for the 1998 British Comedy Awards, announced yesterday.

The line-up of nominations for the ninth annual ceremony, broadcast live on December 12, is dominated by BBC series and performers, but includes a strong rival from Channel 4 — the sitcom *Father Ted*.

Embarrassingly for ITV, which will screen the two and a half hour event, it is nominated in just four of

the 14 categories announced yesterday, one being "best ITV comedy personality".

BBC stars Steve Coogan, Harry Enfield and Paul Whitehouse are nominated personally and for their shows — *I'm Alan Partridge*, *Harry Enfield and Chums* and *The Fast Show*.

Father Ted stars Dermot Morgan, who died earlier this year, and Ardal O'Hanlon, have been nominated for best comedy actor and actress.

The series is also nominated for best TV sitcom against the BBC's *I'm Alan Partridge* and *Men Behaving Badly*.

Two of the BBC's newest comedies have two nominations each. Caroline Aherne's *The Royle Family*, on BBC2, is up for best new comedy, with its star, Sue Johnston, nominated for best comedy actress. And on the same channel, the sketch show *Goodness Gracious Me* is nominated for best comedy series and best new comedy.

ITV can take consolation, however, in its most recent hit, *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*, which is up against *Have I Got News for You* and *They Think It's All Over* for best entertainment series.



Steve Coogan, nominated as himself and Alan Partridge

Blair fights for moral high ground

Poverty: Labour and Tories spell out differences

Lucy Ward
Political Correspondent

TONY Blair last night stressed the Government's active efforts to tackle poverty as Conservative leader William Hague outlined the "moral case" for low taxation in keynote speeches highlighting deep differences over the state's role in tackling social exclusion.

Mr Hague used a speech aimed primarily at renewing traditionally close links between the Tory party and the Church to portray low taxation as a means of "rekindling personal responsibility" and encouraging a culture of charitable giving.

Meanwhile Tony Blair, in

his annual Guildhall speech, pointed to social exclusion as a key weakness of the economy inherited from the previous government, and laid out an "economic case for tackling poverty and unemployment".

In a defence of state intervention in addressing poverty, he said: "If our future lies in employing the potential of our people, then we cannot tolerate a society which in effect writes off 30 per cent of its potential workforce, through poor education or social exclusion."

The aim of the Government's unprecedentedly "comprehensive and ambitious" reform of work and benefits should not merely mean cutting welfare bills, since some welfare spending — including help for the disabled and children — was "good and necessary", Mr Blair said.

His address also included the bold contention that economic stability was "a sexy thing", as he made his most forceful claim yet for Labour's right to the mantle

of "the natural party of economic competence".

He told his white tie audience of City financiers: "Steering a course of stability in an uncertain world — that is the right strategy for the long-term and we will pursue it."

Mr Hague, giving the Conservative and Churches Fellowship Wilberforce lecture, sought to build bridges between his party and the churches after almost two decades of antagonism.

But while launching a new Conservative and Churches standing committee and unveiling plans to listen more closely to the views of the clergy and their congregations, he also attacked senior clerics for assuming collectivism was "morally superior" to Conservative individualism.

Laying out a point by point Christian foundation for Tory principles, he asked churches to accept "that no politician and no political party has a copyright on scripture."

He told the Conservative Christian Fellowship: "All too

often, senior clerics have appeared to assume the moral superiority of a collectivist approach to politics and seemed ready to impute the most base of motives to those of us who hold a Conservative view of the economy and society."

"Things have moved a long way since the Church of England was regarded as the Tory Party at prayer, but there are still many thousands of grassroots Conservatives who not only pray regularly but are actively committed to both the spiritual and social mission of their local church."

Cutting taxes could signify to citizens their obligation to make contributions to society, he claimed.

When the state takes decisions over health care, schooling and pensions, "a price is paid in a diminished sense of civic obligation and personal responsibility. Too many people in our country now believe that they have completed their civic duty along with their tax return."

Leader comment, page 9

Inmate's baby unit ban reviewed

Clare Dyer
Legal Correspondent

PRISON authorities agreed yesterday to hold an unprecedented hearing to reconsider their decision to separate a woman from her newborn baby in Holloway prison, north London.

The 24-year-old woman, named only as Miss E, who is serving a five year jail term, mounted a legal challenge to the decision by Mike Sheldrake, the prison's governor, to refuse her a place in the mother and baby unit.

Three Appeal Court judges began hearing the case last Thursday, bypassing a High Court hearing, because of its urgency. It was due to continue today but lawyers for the Prison Service told the judges a new admissions board would consider her application.

A spokesman for the Prison Service said no similar application had been reconsidered before. The new admissions board, including representatives from Styal prison in Greater Manchester and New Hall in Wakefield, West Yorkshire, which also have mother and baby units, will hear the

application by Friday.

The woman will be legally represented at the hearing. If successful, she could be given a place at any of the three prisons, avoiding the need for Crown social services to take her daughter into care.

But Lord Justice Evans, sitting with Lord Justice Ward and Lord Justice Brooke, warned the mother, who was refused a place in Holloway's unit because of her alleged disruptive behaviour and potential risk to other mothers and babies, to "behave".

Nick Adams, solicitor for the former psychology student

from south London, said the move was "a total climbdown" by the Holloway authorities.

Lawyers for Miss E had accused Holloway of acting "unfairly and unlawfully", and of failing in its legal duty to take into account the child's best interests.

Yesterday, Kenneth Parker QC, for the Prison Service, agreed there should be a new hearing, considering the child's welfare as well as the other children in the mother and baby unit and the need for "order and discipline".

G2, page 7

Further checks on disgraced gynaecologist's patients

Sarah Bosley
Health Correspondent

A FURTHER 24 former patients of the disgraced gynaecologist Rodney Ledward have been referred to consultants for investigations

or treatment, it has emerged. Six weeks ago Mr Ledward was struck off the medical register for gross professional misconduct after the General Medical Council found he had botched 10 women's operations.

The GMC inquiry, which looked at 14 cases, heard dis-

treasing stories from women who had internal damage following gynaecological surgery by Mr Ledward, who was sacked from the William Harvey hospital in Ashford, Kent in December 1996.

Publicly over the case has led 179 former patients to

phone the hospital with concerns about their treatment. Some 130 have made appointments with a consultant there, and 105 have been seen. Of those, 24 were considered to need further investigation.

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War crimes tribunal jails three for torture of Serbs

Stephen Bates in Brussels and Chris Bird in Belgrade

A BOSNIAN Croat prison camp warden and two Muslims were jailed at the international war crimes tribunal in The Hague yesterday for a reign of terror that included the murder and torture of Serb prisoners during the Bosnian war.

But the panel of three judges acquitted a senior Muslim military commander after ruling that he did not have command and control of Celebici camp, in central Bosnia, in 1992.

Human rights lawyers suggested last night that the judgment against the Bosnian Croat commander, Zdravko Mucic, would reinforce the principle of "command responsibility" set during the Nuremberg and Tokyo tribunals, which convicted Nazi and Japanese officers for the crimes of their subordinates.

However, the failure to make the same principle stick to the Muslim commander, Zejnir Delalic, could have implications for the prosecution of other war crime suspects, who could argue that they were not sufficiently connected to the atrocities committed by their subordinates.

Mr Delalic told the court: "Let me thank you for a just and fair judgment. I think it is a very wise judgment and a very courageous one ... [it] has even increased my trust in this institution."

The Australian prosecutor, Grant Nieemann, immediately announced an appeal against the acquittal.

The judges decided that Mucic, aged 43, was commander of the camp and sentenced him to seven years in jail for 11 breaches of the Geneva convention. They said he had command and control of the guards for nine murders, the torture of six victims and



Cleared: Zejnir Delalic

for causing suffering and serious injury to four inmates. The judgment said Mucic had been "clearly derelict" in his duty. He had allowed those under his authority to commit the most heinous offences, without taking disciplinary action.

Mucic, wearing dark sunglasses and with a gold cross on a chain around his neck, was seen to smile as the sentence was pronounced.

Verdict is warning to commanders

YESTERDAY'S judgment at the war crimes tribunal at The Hague extends the principle that a commander is criminally responsible for the acts of his subordinates, established by the Nuremberg and Tokyo tribunals at the end of the second world war, writes Richard Norton-Taylor.

For the first time an international body has ruled that the responsibility of a commander — whether civilian or military — for atrocities goes beyond his own knowledge or formal competence. It also extends



Guilt: Esad Landzo, above, and Hazim Delic and Zdravko Mucic, below, were jailed at The Hague yesterday for prison terror. PHOTOGRAPH: PETER DE JONG

The 500-page judgment said: "He was the person with the primary responsibility for the conditions in which prisoners were kept. The trial chamber is appalled by the inadequacy of the food and water supplies and medical and sleeping facilities ... as well as the atmosphere of terror."

Two Muslim soldiers were also convicted for murdering, raping and torturing Serb prisoners at the camp.

Mucic's deputy, Hazim Delic, aged 34, was given 20 years in jail for 13 counts of breaches of the convention, including two murders and two rapes, and the use of electric shock treatment on inmates.

"We have been appalled by the details of your criminal actions," the presiding judge, Adolbus Karib-Whyte of Nigeria, told Delic. "You displayed a singular brutality in

causing the deaths of two men ... and a calculating cruelty in the torture and mistreatment of many others."

The fourth defendant, a prison guard, Esad Landzo, who was aged 19 at the time, admitted 17 counts, including three killings and the torture of three other inmates, and was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment.

The court said the sentence reflected his youth, impressionability and immaturity, but added: "The nature of his crimes is suggestive of significant imagination and a perverse pleasure in the infliction of pain and suffering."

The court had been told that Serb victims at the camp were beaten to death with baseball bats, or set on fire. Others had been raped by guards or forced to commit sexual acts with members of their own families. One prisoner had had a Muslim party badge nailed to his head after being beaten to death.

The case, which has lasted 19 months, is the first to involve Muslims rather than Serbs, and the first to involve a multiple team of defendants. However, it is only the second which has resulted in convictions after a trial.



The court heard testimony from 122 witnesses and received 691 exhibits. Some witnesses attested to acts of kindness from Mr Delalic and Mucic, who supplied food and clothing and released some inmates.

Those convicted will serve their punishment in any third country willing to hold them, most likely in Scandinavia.

There was disappointment in the Yugoslav capital that Mr Delalic was acquitted. Belgrade's independent B92 radio station yesterday focused on Mr Delalic's acquittal



rather than the sentences passed against two other Muslims and a Croat.

But Milivoj Ivanisevic, head of Centre for Investigation of Crimes Against the Serbian People, said that while he believed Mr Delalic was responsible for crimes at the camp, there was very little evidence against him.

"This is unpleasant information but expected," Mr Ivanisevic said yesterday. "He is totally responsible for the crimes in that camp. But there is very little written evidence against him."

Kurds' leader will remain in Italy

Routiers in Rome

THE Italian prime minister, Massimo D'Alema, made clear yesterday that his country would not submit to blackmail or threats over the extradition of the Kurdish guerrilla leader, Abdullah Ocalan, and said the appeal court would rule on the case.

Referring to Turkey, in his first comments on the arrest of the leader of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), Mr D'Alema said Italian procedures did not permit for extradition to a country where capital punishment was still in force.

The Ocalan case is developing into a serious diplomatic standoff between the two Nato allies. Italy and Turkey locked horns earlier this year when Rome accused Ankara of doing little to halt thousands of Kurds leaving the Turkish coast for Italy.

Mr D'Alema, an ex-communist who came to power three weeks ago at the head of Italy's second centre-left administration, said he was concerned about the plight of an Italian prisoner held hostage by inmates in an Istanbul jail.

Inmates at the jail on Monday refused to free Mario Calci Novati, who is serving time for drugs offences, to put pressure on Italy to extradite Mr Ocalan to Turkey.

"It is not clear to me how a person can be captured and held hostage inside a jail," Mr D'Alema said. "Our country does not intend to submit to blackmail."

Mr Ocalan was arrested at Rome's Fiumicino airport last Thursday and the Turkish government has asked Italy to extradite him. Turkish authorities have yet to deliver all papers relating to the Ocalan case to Italy's justice ministry.

Mr D'Alema said Mr Ocalan had applied for political asylum and his request would go through the usual procedures, as did all asylum requests. "Italy is a democratic country. It is a country of justice," he said.

Dr Mahathir chokes on Gore speech

John Gittings

THE United States vice-president, Al Gore, got off to a sticky start at the Asian-Pacific Economic Co-operation summit in Kuala Lumpur yesterday when he offended his Malaysian hosts in a banquet speech which backed the pro-democracy reform movement.

Developing President Bill Clinton's argument that democracies are better at solving economic crises, Mr Gore, who was standing in for Mr Clinton, chose a punchline which invoked the spirit of ex-finance minister, Anwar Ibrahim, and enraged his hosts.

"From Thailand to South Korea, Eastern Europe to Mexico, democracies have done better in coping with economic crises than nations where freedom is suppressed," he said in a dinner speech to an audience including the Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad.

"And so, among nations suffering economic crises, we continue to hear calls for democracy and reform in many languages. People's power, do it, reform!"

"We hear them today — right here, right now — among the brave people of Malaysia," Mr Gore said.

Dr Mahathir, a vocal proponent of so-called Asian values, was overheard saying: "I've never seen anybody so rude."

The Malaysian trade minister, Rafidah Aziz, said Mr Gore's speech had "completely spoiled" the summit before it had even started. "It is the

most disgusting speech I have ever heard in my life."

"People's power" evokes the Philippines anti-Marcos revolution and doi moi is the Vietnamese phrase for perestroika. At the weekend, supporters of Mr Anwar were bused by fire engines when they shouted "reformasi" in Kuala Lumpur.

While several leaders of the Asia-Pacific Economic Forum have made clear their distaste at the apparent political motivation behind Mr Anwar's detention on charges of corruption and sodomy, Mr Gore's heavy rhetoric was a world apart from the Asian way of expressing criticism.

His speech distracted attention from the one piece of good news at the summit. In a new \$10 billion (\$5 billion) package to revitalise the Asian economy, the US will put in \$5 billion, matching the same sum from Japan, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank jointly.

However, correctly Washington's position reflects widespread disquiet at the trial of Mr Anwar, it has been delivered in a manner which Malaysian officials can easily dismiss as "Western lecturing".

Nor does it help that the US secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, rushed home to tackle the Iraq crisis, and that Mr Clinton withdrew at the last moment.

The summit preliminaries were marred by the collapse of Asia's economy and by the failure of a ministerial meeting to agree to the removal of tariffs from nine types of widely traded products.



A lone student protester sits in front of a line of Indonesian soldiers blocking access to a road leading to former president Suharto's home in Jakarta. PHOTOGRAPH: VITASARI

Habibie urges calm but rounds up opponents

John Gittings in Jakarta

INDONESIA'S president, B.J. Habibie, last night urged the students to "avoid anarchy" and accept that transition to democracy will take time. But any chance of a positive response was undercut by the silent presence of General Wiranto, and by a police round-up of 10 opposition politicians, for questioning under a law which covers treason.

Although they were later released, the attorney-general claimed that they were suspected of "instigating the people's movement". Students staged a few small demonstrations, while thousands of Jakarta homes flew flags at half-mast in mourning for those shot by Gen Wiranto's troops last week.

Some non-governmental human rights groups say that they have been put on a list of subversive organisations and many opponents of the

regime are believed to be under surveillance. In his nationwide appeal, Mr Habibie expressed his condolences for the 14 or more killed last week and promised that those responsible — including members of the security forces — would be punished.

Most of the dead were students, although four were government vigilantes killed by an angry crowd. The Jakarta Red Cross says another six students are missing.

Mr Habibie said the main demands of the students for reform had been met in the decrees passed by the People's Consultative Assembly. But students yesterday mocked a report from the attorney-general which said that the wealth of former president Suharto, whom they wish to see on trial for corruption — was far less than reported in the media.

Mr Habibie still has considerable resources on his side. The majority of the old political establishment know if he goes, they will fall with him. The armed forces under Gen Wiranto share a mutual interest with Mr Habibie in maintaining power. And Muslim fundamentalists hope to secure concessions in return for their support.

Sympathetic observers of the student movement warn that public opinion was initially less favourable than in May to their demonstrations last week. Many people believed that the Habibie gov-

ernment should be given a chance, although this view has been severely jolted by the army's behaviour.

Yesterday's round-up included Sukmanti Sukarno, a daughter of the first Indonesian president, two retired army generals and several prominent critics.

All had signed a statement last week calling on Mr Habibie to resign for a transitional government to be formed and for elections to be held immediately.

Indian disabled hail first world cricket cup for the blind

Suzanne Goldenberg in New Delhi

ANAND SHARMA listens intently to the rattle of the cricket ball skidding along the ground to his left. He runs for the catch, then rolls the ball to the bowler.

In cricket-mad India, even the blind grow up dreaming of playing in international tournaments. For Sharma,

the 21-year-old captain of India's side in the first world cup cricket for the blind, those ambitions become reality today.

Six other sides — from England, New Zealand, Australia, Pakistan, South Africa and Sri Lanka — are to take part, and the final will be broadcast live.

"I used to listen to the radio commentary all day long," Sharma said. "That is how I could learn all the

rules and regulations. So I started playing."

The game is played with a plastic ball, filled with 25 ball bearings so that players can be guided by its sound, and with metal wickets, to distinguish from the sound of ball against the wooden bat.

The wickets are screwed together so players can orient themselves by touch. Activists for Indians with disabilities say the tourna-

ment is a milestone. "It is a salute to the disability movement, and to the fact that disabled people have reached a stage where they are beginning to assert themselves," said Javed Abidi, director of the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People.

India has 12 million visually impaired people, yet most blind children receive no education.

"Even in privileged and cultured families, people don't have any ambitions for their blind children," said George Abraham, president of the Association for Cricket for the Blind.

Yet the stigma of disability is gradually vanishing — hastened by legislation passed two years ago which provides the first legal protection against discrimination. Even so, disabled and blind beggars are a feature of most Indian cities.

White canes and guide dogs are practically unknown in India. Wheelchairs, too, are a rare sight. The airport in New Delhi is the only one in the country to have lifts for disabled passengers.

Even the cricket tournament has gone largely ignored. But Mr Abraham refuses to be discouraged. "Normal cricket reached its nadir about 125 years after it started," he said.



A blind cricketer takes a catch. PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN MCCONNICO

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US POLICY
The Psychology of Int...

UN monitors to adopt 'softly-softly' approach in search for weapons • Washington's promises of aid to dissidents greeted with caution

Inspectors plan quiet comeback



A UN arms inspector prepares to return to Iraq

Ian Black
Diplomatic Editor

THE United Nations weapons inspectors returning to Baghdad today are to adopt a softly-softly approach in their hunt for Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

Officials at the New York headquarters of the UN Special Commission (Unscm) said last night that routine monitoring of identified sites — ensuring that paint factories are producing paint and not banned weapons — would resume at once, but "spot" discovery inspections could take longer to mount.

Diplomats agreed that air strikes would have made it very difficult for the 100 inspectors withdrawn a week ago to return. Now Unscm's chairman, Richard Butler, believes that their work could be completed in two to three months if Iraq co-operates fully.

One senior source said: "What is important now is for Unscm just to get back to

Saddam is cornered, says Blair

Nicholas Watt and Michael White, and Martin Kettle in Washington

BITAIN and the United States would have no hesitation in attacking Iraq without warning if Baghdad again defied United Nations weapons inspectors, Tony Blair warned yesterday.

As UN humanitarian staff flew back to Baghdad — weapons inspectors are to return today — Mr Blair

said Saddam Hussein was cornered by greater international support than ever before for military strikes.

"No warnings, no wrangling, no negotiations, no last-minute letters. The next withdrawal of co-operation and he will be hit," the Prime Minister told the Commons. "If there is a next time, I will have no hesitation in ordering the use of force."

But it is far from clear that Russia, France and China share this view.

though senior Foreign Office sources claimed yesterday that warnings from both Moscow and Paris had been instrumental in persuading the Iraqi leader to "blink".

Sixty-four inspectors of the UN Special Commission, Unscm, will test Iraq's willingness to co-operate.

It emerged yesterday that President Bill Clinton's decision to abort the planned attacks on Saturday was made against the advice of some of his most senior advisers.

The Washington Post reported that the secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, the defence secretary, William Cohen, and the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, General Henry Shelton, all favoured continuing with the assault on Iraq during what was described as "a hurried debate on Saturday morning".

The principal voice opposed to continuing the strike was the president's national security adviser, Sandy Berger.

distance themselves from Unscm's programme, to deflect accusations that they control it. Unscm, which has to certify banned weapons are destroyed before sanctions can be lifted, is already unpopular in the UN.

It is nervous at being in the spotlight at a time when Russia, anxious to hasten the end of the embargo, will be insisting that the commission fully respect Iraqi sovereignty.

"We don't want to be accused of provocations," one official said. "We've got to think of good inspections."

But it is unlikely there will be much to find. Iraq's Special Security Organisation, controlled by President Saddam's son Uday, is certain to have moved incriminating materials and documents in the three months since spot checks were stopped.

"The inspectors may well find they have access to sites which were denied to them before, but they will be aware that things they are searching for will be moved around at the Iraqis continue to practise concealment," said Terry Taylor, a former inspector.

Exiles wary of Clinton aid pledge

US POLICY/
The new shift in position reminds some of the 1991 débâcle

Martin Kettle
in Washington and
Ian Black in London

IRAQI opposition groups reacted cautiously yesterday to the announcement by President Bill Clinton that the United States would now work actively for the overthrow of Saddam Hussein.

The policy shift from containment to intervention was highlighted in Mr Clinton's statement on Sunday, after the latest crisis over weapons inspections. He said the US intended to "intensify" support for "the forces of change in Iraq", and said he would work with Congress to implement a new law to help the Iraqi opposition.

After his statement, Ahmed Chalabi, president of the Iraqi National Congress (INC), the most prominent opposition group, flew to Washington to explore prospects for further US backing and implementation of America's new Iraq Liberation Act, passed by Congress last month.

It authorises the Clinton administration to provide \$57 million (\$20.5m) in military training and equipment to approved Iraqi opposition groups.

Iraqi exiles in London, the main opposition centre, welcomed the new commitment by Mr Clinton — echoed by Tony Blair in the Commons yesterday — but there was scepticism as to how far he would be prepared to go.

"We see a welcome shift regarding Saddam Hussein and his regime," said the INC spokesman, Nabil Musawi. "Now we would like to see a transformation from rhetoric to action on the ground."

Iraq described the commitment to the opposition as a "flagrant violation of international law", while France's foreign minister, Hubert Verdrine, criticised the move.

The US and Britain face

considerable difficulties in dealing with a bitterly fragmented opposition whose many groups have been penetrated by the Iraqi regime. US officials estimate there are 73 opposition groups vying for international support.

Dr Chalabi, a charismatic public relations star, has no power base of his own and critics say he has failed to build a broad-based opposition since the INC was founded in 1992. US support of \$5 million a year was cut off at the end of 1996 and its radio station closed down.

The INC is also at daggers drawn with the current US favourite, the Iraqi National Accord. The INA is a grouping of ex-Iraqi military and security men and some Ba'ath party activists said to be able to orchestrate a coup in the armed forces — though at least three known attempts have failed.

The INA, with a large presence in London, is said by its critics to be a puppet of the CIA, and to have been extensively penetrated by Iraqi government agents.

Exile sources say the INA is working on the "silver bullet option" — killing President Saddam and keeping his power structure intact, perhaps with him being replaced by his son Uday. INA's head is the publicity-shy Ayad Alawi, a former head of Iraqi intelligence in Western Europe.

The US has a ban on the use of assassination as an instrument of policy, under a 1976 law signed by President Gerald Ford.

Not everyone wants Washington's help. "The way the Americans are dealing with the Iraq opposition is an insult," said an Iraqi Communist Party official.

"They are helping Saddam prolong his regime, because he can easily claim they are tools in the hands of external forces. We don't need arms or money. The regime can't be tackled with 90 or 100 million dollars. We need moral and political support, not backing for marginal groups."

But expectations of a radical shift are not high. "If Clinton is not serious," the INC's Mr Musawi warned, "then this would mean a second American president is about to mislead the Iraqi people, like George Bush did in 1991."



US soldiers, part of a groundforce deployment in Kuwait, check their weapons in a concrete shelter near the Iraqi border

Rebellion in southern marshes is crushed

UPRISING/As Western eyes focus on Baghdad, Saddam shows no mercy for mujahedin

Ben de Pear in Tehran

THE threat of air strikes may have made Saddam Hussein back down over weapons inspections, but in the south of Iraq he is far from relenting in a ruthless offensive against the Marsh Arabs.

According to the mujahedin in Iraq, President Saddam has turned his eye to the rebellious south while the West has focused on Baghdad.

At least 19 towns and villages between Nasiriyah and Amara are being bombarded, in the second large-scale attack in less than a month.

The Marsh Arabs say that United States and RAF aircraft, which make regular patrols over the southern no-fly zone, must have seen the destruction.

To crush a Shi'a uprising after the Gulf war, President Saddam drained the marshes — a triangle of land between Amara, Nasiriyah and Basra — and destroyed an eco-system and 5,000-year-old culture in the process.

But the mujahedin have kept fighting a low-intensity war, making the barren landscape a no-go area for President Saddam's troops.

The mujahedin say the latest attacks are a reprisal for their victory in a six-day battle that ended on October 27.

A British television crew in the area the day before reported huge military convoys streaming along the main Basra to Amara road, but were told it was inaccessible because of "repair work".

One of the three mujahedin leaders from October's battle said the current offensive was far larger. Led by President Saddam's cousin, Ali Hassan Majid, (the engineer of the 1988 chemical attack on the Kurds), the elite Fedayin have been drafted to join infantry and armoured divisions totalling over 5,000 troops.

The mujahedin leader said: "All are hungry for revenge. And there are only 200 of us."

The troops have surrounded eight villages around Nasiriyah including Al-Shadid, Al Obaid, Al Ramla, and

Al Gobe. He said thousands were cut off from fresh supplies of food and water. Anyone venturing out was shot.

In the district of Amara, north-east of Nasiriyah, seven other settlements including Abu Shuzar, Al Chedi, Al Sagar are sealed off. There, said another mujahedin, even the animals looking for pasture were shot. There are increasing fears that the people of the villages will meet the same fate.

In reprisals for the October defeat, 150 homes were bulldozed in the village of Al Zora, south of Nasiriyah. Despite the homes being empty of fighters, the remaining women, children and elderly in the village were shelled, with huge loss of life.

The most feared punishment, however, is cynical in its cruelty. Families are rounded up and flown to Iraq's empty quarter of western deserts. There they are abandoned without food or water and left to die. For this water-borne people, this is a fate worse than death, and one which has serious religious implications.

The mujahedin say a Marsh Arab noble known as Abu Hattam has sustained the rebel movement. He has vowed to kill President Saddam or die fighting. Virtually

unreported in the West because of the area's inaccessibility, their fight is kept quiet by Iran because of its sensitive relations with Iraq.

Abu, a quietly spoken mujahid who fights alongside Abu Hattam, says the whole of the south, whether Shi'a or Sunni, hates President Saddam. It is this hatred, he says, and Mr Hattam's determination, which has ensured their survival. A network of spies throughout the government and intelligence services en-

sures their effectiveness is far greater than their actual fighting numbers.

As our interview ended, the mujahid said: "This whole world sees what Saddam does on television. The aeroplanes from America and Britain are flying over the battle areas; we can see them and they can surely see us being slaughtered."

"Why all this crisis over weapons inspections? Why do they do nothing for the people of Iraq itself?"

'No warnings, no wrangling, no talks, no last minute letters'

Tony Blair

'The Iraqi decision has cut the ground from under those drumming for pushing the Gulf region to the precipice of war'

Baghdad Observer

'No more hiding and seeking. No more playing games'

William Cohen
US defence secretary

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Summary of terms and conditions of the Tender Offer

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This is a summary of the terms and conditions of the Tender Offer. Full details of which are contained in the circular to shareholders of the Company dated 17 November 1998 (the "Circular") and the accompanying announcement ("Announcement") and Offer Forms.

Procedure for tendering

The Circular together with copies of the Announcement and the Offer Form have been posted by the Company to registered holders of Ordinary Shares. Qualifying Shareholders wishing to tender Ordinary Shares should lodge their duly completed Offer Forms together with their share certificates and/or other documents of title by post with Lloyds Bank Registrars, The Causeway, Worthing, West Sussex BN99 6DA so as to arrive not later than 3.00pm on Tuesday 24 November 1998. Copies of the Circular may be obtained from Lloyds Bank Registrars at the above address.

17 November 1998

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Ruler's sister-in-law dies

AP in Geneva

THE wife of the half brother of Saddam Hussein has died in Switzerland, officials said yesterday.

An official of the Iraqi embassy said he understood Abdulhamid al-Tikriti died last week. She was 44.

A spokeswoman for a suburban hospital confirmed that she had died but declined to give the cause or say when. She had reportedly been receiving treatment for breast cancer.

The death is expected to

complicate the situation of her husband, Barzan al-Tikriti, who last summer was ordered to return to Baghdad in a sweeping change of diplomatic posts.

He has reportedly cited his wife's illness and treatment as reasons for his staying in Geneva, but has denied having any desire to join the Iraqi opposition.

Earlier this month Iraqi dissidents said a cousin of President Saddam failed to convince Mr al-Tikriti to return home instead of going into exile.

Mr al-Tikriti, aged 46,

headed Iraq's mission at the United Nations in Geneva for 10 years.

He was among 30 Iraqi ambassadors and other diplomats recalled to Baghdad over the summer.

Last month, President Saddam's cousin, General Mithal Saab al-Hassan, met with Mr al-Tikriti in Geneva and conveyed a message that his decision to go into exile was harming the Iraqi regime's image, said dissidents.

The Swiss government says Mr al-Tikriti has until the end of November to leave Geneva under Swiss laws.

**Simon
Bowers**

TIM Dwelly of Penzance writes to alert other Cornish readers to some sound advice from his local GP. "Thinking of getting pregnant in November?" asks a notice in the doc's surgery, 30 miles from the nearest maternity unit at Trillick Hospital in Truro. "If so think again. Next August is the eclipse." "That's the total solar eclipse, visible on these shores only from Cornwall." "The roads," the doc observes, "will be jammed with visitors so it may be extremely difficult to get to Trillick." Wise words, and not to be forgotten on those long winter evenings.



Blair's success depends on success. One failure, and everything changes

Hugo Young



TONY BLAIR, so clear about many things, has a divided mind in respect of the one which, perhaps, is the biggest. He wants to render power, and yet to keep it. No modern British leader did anything like as much as he is doing to create new power centres, and thus strip himself of formal dominance. He has created a new centre to exert, at another level, as near total control as he can muster. This conflict is capable of testing Mr Blair's legendary leadership qualities to destruction. The toppling of Lord Darnley could be a modern version of the assassination of Archbishop Ferdinand, the little accident that unleashed a cataclysm.

The Blair surrenders are so palpable that I barely need to list them. No other leader has ever wanted to give his ministers for Scotland and Wales, and only one predecessor ever wanted to. None set about transferring policy powers from politicians to judges, via incorporation of the Human Rights. None contemplated an elected mayor of London, calling this a prelude to mayors everywhere else.

Notwithstanding the place of his own person with menial-chamber disturbances to the first and second chamber.

This is not the programme of a conservative, a centrist or a control freak. Rather it is the programme of a man by him by forces beyond his control. It is based on a notably un-self-centred theory of government, reflecting a priority that is to be essentially personal, which springs from impatience with the failure of the single-centre system to produce a political class of talent in depth. The existence

ministers – will, according to this theory, attract new and better people into public life. In Mr Blair's early account of the *act of homage*, respect rather than any grand devolutionist master-plan, came most naturally to his mind.

Against this background, some current developments need explaining. The commitment to the *act of homage* seems to be exceeded by a ferocious insistence that they should be exercised only by Blair-like people: if not, as insists, people he has chosen, then people whose birth he thinks the party appropriate to every part of the region is schooled to recognise. I can explain this quite easily: yet the ease of explanation is apt to disguise, I think, the direct complexity of the outcome.

The explanation lies, first, in his history. Mr Blair has a much time for, save the adomitory history of the recent past. Anyone passing a tolerant eye over Ken Livingstone, he says, has forgotten the Labour Party of the 1980s. The Labour Party was transformed in the years of interminable destruction, will never allow them to recur. They regard with an utter lack of sentiment the people who, while now posing as constructive, were then regarded by their status as destroyers. Mr Blair sees it as a sacred duty to be vigilant against any repetition of the woolly-minded tolerance that allowed the party to be taken by the enemies of the people.

This is intelligible enough, as is his parallel insistence that the Welsh, Scottish and Northern people have not been offered a deal, but a merely devolution. Therefore the centre must have its say, and the counter-case has to be confronted head-on. This is

diction between surrender and control. Aversion from history coexists with the least of his own confidence in the new man's superior dom of himself, which exceeds even that of Margaret Thatcher.

It's not that Mr Blair is more certain of his policies. How could any mortal man be? He is a man of conviction, the baroness of every detail large and small. But unlike her, he grips his party with iron; and therefore combines confidence in his goals with an untouchable belief in his master's will to guarantee them. However unsure he admits to being about some details, there's not a field of policy where he won't confide that he knows where he wants to be in a few years time, with a blitheness not shared by the baroness. He always to specify where that destination might exactly be. One part of the Blair mind-set may be history, but the other is a transcendent belief, unsurpassed by any leader in his time, that he can command capacity to personify and voice the project Labour were elected to carry out.

SO MUCH for the explanation of surrender and the public obligation, and the systematic surrenders do not remove the duty to exercise it where it remains available. A true surrender, we're given to understand, is a permanent one. The parliaments and assemblies and mayoralties should grow into maturity in due time; and after a period of invigilation from the centre will be allowed their legitimate role as genuine invigilators of the culture.

This is a neat, and maybe honest, blueprint, flawed by

[illegible]

Free-market forecasters don't know their boom from their bust

City boffins wrong again

**Paul
Font**



MARX says somewhere that capitalism is always booming until the day it is in crisis. He might have added — and even during the crisis the spectre of the boom lingers on. No service industry is more heavily subsidised by capitalists than economic forecasting. The best brains of our generation are set to work to tell us what will happen next. Yet no industry has a worse record. Absolutely no one predicted the collapse of the Russian economy in the

Professor Richard Layard of the London School of Economics and John Parker, European editor of free market's top propaganda sheet, the Economist, had just published a book entitled The Coming Russian Boom. No one predicted the sudden progressive collapse of the "tiger" econ-

When the tigers and the privatized Russian bear suddenly disintegrated, something like panic swept the financial journals. "Does Anyone Have The Answers?" pleaded the usually very cocksure *Far Eastern Economic Review*. After 80 pages, the answer was No.

"Not since the 1980s has a financial crisis appeared to pose such a threat to the world as a whole," wrote Martin Wolf of the *Financial Times*.

THEN, miraculously, nothing very terrible seemed to happen. A few thousand workers lost their jobs. But the stock exchange rallied a little. Perhaps the "storm" had passed, the "contagion" had been cured. Last

Saturday's Financial Times editorial was entitled *Cruising Nicely Past Recession*. "The reefs and shoals of recession are past," it said. But hold on. There was a two-word proviso: "if you're a fish." The best brains are transfixed on the wheel of fortune. Nobody plans the free market and therefore nobody can predict it. It runs on two engines: the greed and fear of the rich, neither of which has anything to do with rationality or predictability. The only certainty is uncertainty, the only sure thing insecurity. If City boffins want to predict the economy, they will have to plan it. There are plenty of other people, less well paid and less clothed with jargon, who could do that job much better

ON A glorious spring morning 31 years ago I wandered down to the Round House to hear a

who had provoked the outrage of the rightwing press. I was in superior mood. I thought I was in favour of workers' power, not black power, but after an hour listening to Stokeley Carmichael, the two ideals came

His theme, which he pursued with the most ferocious wit, was discovery: "Columbus discovered America, but what about the people who were already there?"

All of us lucky to be there that morning discovered a new black America, angry, funny, intransigent, determined to be free. He died of cancer on Sunday, but anyone who heard him speak will never forget

I WAS amazed to see the names of fine, independent-minded, even socialist, poets like Tony Harrison, Andrew Motion and Benjamin Zephaniah bandied about as possible candidates for the post of Poet Laureate. Surely everyone knows by now that to be Poet Laureate you have to be a Tory, a royalist or a creep.

If anyone has any doubt about this, or imagines that the post is some sort of honour, I refer them to Byron's Don Juan, which starts with a glorious, and originally censored,

*Bob Southey! You'ren poet,
Poet Laureate! And representative
of all the race, / Although
'tis true that you turned out o
Thorpe! Last*

Byron was seldom deflected by problems with rhyme, and he quite rightly judged "Tory at" a perfectly apposite rhyme for "laureate".

The market runs
on the greed and
fear of the rich.
Nobody plans it

compliance with the Tory government and its hated foreign secretary Lord Castlereagh. He asked whether the great John Milton would have grovelled in the same way.

**Would HE adore a sultan?
HE obey/ That intellectual eu-
nuch Castlereagh?**

*Would he subside into n hack-
ney Laureate — / A scribbling,
self-sold, soul-tired, scorn'd
Fascinator?*

"I doubt," Byron added, "if 'Laureate' and 'Iscairiot' be good rhymes, but must say as Ben Johnson did to Sylvester who challenged him to rhyme with *I John Sylloester Lay with your sister*."

"Johnson answered — 'I, Ben Johnson, lay with your wife.' Sylvester answered: 'This is not rhyme'. 'No,' said Johnson, 'but it's true.'"

Orphanages are bursting with 1,500,000 abandoned boys and girls in the former Communist countries as things get worse, not better.

Children of chaos

Don McReady

IT IS nine years since the conditions in Romanian orphanages were brought to the appalled attention of the British public. At the time the emergency was first exposed, the British responded wonderfully — millions of pounds were raised and the then Romanian Orphanages Trust started a programme of reforms which saved the lives and sanity of thousands of children.

Recently another emergency in a similarly stark form became familiar. For television viewers or newspaper readers the fate of the Kosovar children on the hillsides hardly bore thinking about. Some emergency relief got through and there was again the great willingness of the British to help.

Now something about the pain of others. The Serbs started to move their soldiers out of

the Kozvovs' territory and the crisis was temporarily diminished.

However the arrival, partial solution and apparent disappearance of such humanitarian crises for children in the future of the former eastern and Soviet bloc disguises the overall, disastrous picture for family life there.

The tragedy sitting on our European doorstep is that the number of children there being consigned to state institutional care has actually risen since the fall of Communism.

Unicef figures state there were around 1,000,000 children in the orphanages of eastern Europe and the former Soviet Republic in 1995. There are now 1,500,000 children in these discredited institutions.

Workers in the field know that this number is likely to rise still more. How did it not? Children are not sent

to institutions in Romania, Albania, Russia, Moldova, because their parents are less loving than parents in the West. They are sent there because there is not enough food at home for them, because families have broken under the strain.

The factory closure programme is still under way

There is not enough food – families break under the strain

in countries like Ukraine. Many more jobs will disappear and along with them the child care which was attached to employment. In Belarus, the privatisation programme which is to come has not yet been set in motion. When it starts, fac-

tries will shut some children away and end up in the orphanages.

Because Eastern European countries are seen as victims of the ravages of monolithic Communism, they are not seen as developing countries. The aid budgets for countries like Albania, Macedonia and Bulgaria are small. Money comes from the public for disaster relief and is necessary and welcome — but the next step must be the recognition that in the fate of these children we are not dealing with a sporadic series of emergencies but with a systematic humanitarian abuse.

The European Children's Trust, which was the Romanian Orphanage Trust and which changed its name and remit in response to what we saw happening in the field, wants this issue to move much higher up the

ment and international bodies.

Clare Short has recognised that social need must be targeted and this is a wonderful advance. But the fate of these European children is still being left largely, to voluntary agencies.



A-ICA-AV26

cies to deal with. Our organisation works in partnership with local and national government to train child-care workers to support families as well to improve conditions in institutions.

Other charities target or-

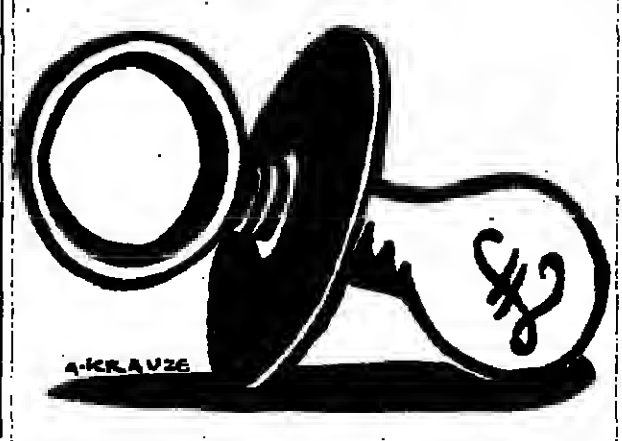
phanages or primary relief. But the notion that the fate of these 1,500,000 children is best left to the voluntary agencies — which sometimes operate on a very small scale through individual churches or even individuals — is wrong.

The great emphasis of much government and multilateral aid to Eastern Europe is on civil society development, the addressing of the democratic deficit.

This is high-minded and right. But the same concerted and dedicated national and multilateral effort should be expended on the care of the children who are the most profound victims of the elongated period of transition from totalitarianism to the free-market, democratic model of society.

Don McReady is chief executive.

Don McReady is chief executive of the European Children's Trust.



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New deal for the old

But it will need legislation

HISTORIANS will be hit by the paradox. Perhaps the greatest social achievement of the last century has been the 25 years added to life expectancy. And yet a society which has been so successful in reducing the injuries of biological ageing has been pathetically weak in addressing the injuries imposed by social ageing. Rarely has the world experienced such a huge demographic shift. We already live in possibly the oldest society that has existed, but it is going to get even older. Unlike earlier seismic population shifts — caused by war, famine or plague — the new shift can be anticipated. Fewer births and longer lives mean the number of people aged 65 and over will increase at 10 times the overall rate of population growth in the next 40 years. But who is going to pay for them? Paradoxically in a society in which people are living longer and healthier than before, even more older workers are being laid off. The trend is at least 25 years old. Today one out of three men reach pension age without a job. Of the 9.3 million people in Britain aged between 50 and 64, some 3.7 million are not working. Ministers do not challenge this analysis, set out three years ago by the Carnegie Inquiry into the Third Age and reignited this year by Age Concern's millennium Debate of the Age. Employment minister Andrew Smith was rightly urging companies yesterday to recruit and promote staff according to ability, not age. Ministers have already banned upper age limits in recruit-

ment advertisements in jobcentres and launched a special programme for unemployed people over 50. Yesterday they published a draft code of practice aimed at tackling age discrimination at work and promised they would consult with industrial tribunal chairmen to explore whether this voluntary code could be used in hearings dealing with age discrimination claims. The moves coincided with a report from the Employers' Forum on Age which estimates age discrimination was costing the UK economy a cool £26 billion a year.

Is there anything else ministers could be doing? Indeed there is. They have still not put their own house in order, as the biggest civil service union noted yesterday. Thousands of civil servants — not just Whitehall's high-fliers but security guards, museum wardens, traffic wardens and cleaners — have to retire at 60. Why don't ministers give a lead and allow those who want to work until 65 to do so? More fundamental is the need for anti age discrimination legislation. The history of discrimination demonstrates that it is not until legislation is passed that major progress is made. The race relations laws in the 1960s changed attitudes as well as behaviour. The sex discrimination acts followed suit. Of course women and black people still suffer discrimination but the law shifted attitudes much more decisively than any amount of exhortation. Labour recognised this blunt truth in opposition and committed itself to bringing older people under the protection of the law. Now under pressure from employers for already interfering in the labour market too much, it has moved in government from "we will" to "we don't rule it out". For a government committed to ending social exclusion that was a mistake, but a mistake which can be rectified. By all means let the voluntary code begin chang-

ing attitudes, but ministers should recognise serious reform will need legislation. A decade ago Michael Young, the social entrepreneur, suggested age should be abolished as the governing criterion of life. Ageing does not conform to a uniform rate, yet individuals have to declare their age in order to go to school, work, indulge in sexual intercourse, buy alcohol, marry, vote or drive. That might be too radical but a ban on age discrimination at work is not.

Animal pain

Not unless there's human gain

IN AN ideal world consumers would have reams of information about what they buy. Voluminous labels on, say, lipstick or shampoo would tell them the how and why, letting them decide the balance of risk and value. If testing products on animals offended them, market forces would ensure companies got the message. But ideal worlds such as that exist only in the heads of Nobel prize-winning economists. Here in mundane reality, Anita Roddick may have made a lot of money but many consumers are still woefully ignorant about how what they buy is produced. That's why there is a case for government to exercise its prohibitionist muscle and make a short-cut between public values and what is on the shelves.

In line with a manifesto promise, the Government has now extended the ban on testing cosmetics to include their components. It won't have any dramatic effects. The licensing regime has been tightening for a while, crying rabbits ensured industry got the message. But public opinion takes a different view about the use of animals in biological and pharmaceutical research. Proximity to death and disease, as Sir Paul

McCartney now allows, leads to a greater willingness to concede a balance of interest (and evils). There's no linear relationship between the volume of live animal experiment and therapeutic progress, no simple calculus between animal pain and human gain. Most people, pragmatically, go with the RSPCA and want alternatives to the use of animals. They also accept the scientists' argument that the progress of knowledge — especially what we need to improve therapies for human disease — will for the foreseeable future depend on mammalian experiments. Large numbers of fish and birds are also used.

The animal welfare charities have sometimes been tempted by fundamentalism — the belief that their view of the natural order should prevail. They are entitled to inform, persuade and lobby, and ought to do so knowing how much revulsion silly stunts like the release of captive animals such as the New Forest mink can cause. The use of live animals for the sake of developing cosmetics continues in the United States, in Japan, in other countries within the European Union. The Government, logically, ought to extrapolate its domestic stand to Brussels and perhaps even trade negotiations. Until then the animal welfare bodies have every right, perhaps even a duty, to ensure that consumers know the full price they pay for beautification.

Is God a Tory?

A contested poll in paradise

FRESH from his apparent success in wooing Kenneth Clarke over a pint in a Nottingham pub, William Hague now has his eye on a bigger catch. Perhaps encouraged by his aunt's success in winning the lottery, he is

hoping to re-convert God to the Conservative cause. He has stressed that Conservatism is rooted in the Christian tradition and distanced himself from the Thatcherite anomy that alienated Church leaders in the eighties, when Marmion displaced God in the Tory liturgy. His party has been keen to counter Mr Blair's brand of Christian socialism, and in a speech yesterday to the Conservative Christian Fellowship Mr Hague claimed that Conservatism and Christian beliefs were often intertwined, and that in many respects the Church of England remained the Conservative Party at prayer.

God's political views are notoriously difficult to disentangle. He has of course yet to grant an interview to Martin Bashir, and His manifesto is open to wide interpretation. Conservatives have tended to find solace in the Ten Commandments and in the more robust teaching of the Old Testament, with its emphasis on reaping whirlwinds, smiting widely, and extracting eyes for eyes. The left has preferred the more communitarian parts about blessing the poor, exalting the humble, loving your neighbours and driving out money lenders. Jesus, smoter and emoter at different points, has been claimed by both sides. Only the LibDems have had difficulties: Jesus would, you feel, not have been an eager convert to PR.

But who knows? God moves in mysterious ways and trying to second guess Him is pointless. Perhaps even now Heaven's number-crunchers are wrestling with the complexities of AV with top-up and God will plump for Jenkins. On the other hand, Labour's readiness to open nightclubs on the Sabbath may boost Tory hopes of gaining Paradise Central at the next election. Short of an NOP survey of the heavenly choirs, the only reliable indicator is John 1:18: "No man hath seen God at any time", and His voting preferences passeth all understanding.

Letters to the Editor

The paper's poet

MOMOWLAM and others want a "people's poet laureate" and so perceived as a possibility leads to mediocrity (Laureate stokes: Fanthorpe moves through the field, November 16). The idea that "ordinary people" will only respond to that which they "believe to be popular" is both patronising and flawed. The previous laureate wrote a chart-topper containing words (that's all they are) which are both accessible and affecting. While only a small percentage of people have read Birthday Letters, a much larger group could find it valuable. So if you want meaningful poetry, why not let the laureate's brief and let us ordinary folk read the results. It might all sail over our heads, or it might make us care. It's got to be worth a go. Dave Farrar, London.

U A FANTHORPE'S birthday poem for Prince Charles (A Resumé At Fifty, November 14) is a worthy effort, but with some very prosaic lines amongst the various shifts of tone. Does the effort not illustrate more than anything the impossibility of there being a court poet in these times and that the designation of "laureate" is simply an anachronism? Neil Andgrave, London.

THANKS greatly for the U A Fanthorpe verses but you really have no need to make so much out of nothing. It is all so very simple. If the poem were to abate and Charles become king, we could get Spike Milligan as poet laureate. Robin Bethell, Ashton-U-Lyne, Lancs.

Bad sports

JOANNA Mellor surely misses the point (Letters, November 16). Paul Gascoigne and Vinnie Jones are no exemplars of chivalry in sport, but then neither have pretensions to be pillars of the establishment. "Sir" Geoffrey, with his silly hats and ludicrously glossed shoes does. His refusal to take his defeat at the hands of the French justice system is simply redolent of his international defensive stays at the crasseously in the name of "Test Cricket", but actually contributing more to the mummification of the game. David Firth, London.

SINCE you chose to comment on one of David Hopkins' contributions to the Liverpool v Leeds game, could you get his name right? Who the hell is Robert Hopkins? The Guardian has been head and shoulders above the rest of the press in its reporting of the recent trials at Leeds but this piece also ignored the fact that Leeds snatched a memorable victory at a ground where they have had very little success in the past. Simon Martin, London.

Still trying to get there

DESPAIR. Since the day Virgin took over the West Coast line, the Guardian has relentlessly attacked our staff (Grief encounter, November 14). These 4,000 people have worked day and night to turn this run-down network around. They are beginning to succeed after only 18 months and will succeed. But they are not helped by the Guardian's demoralising and unfair attacks on them, which have no objective balance. It is taking several years to turn the Observer around and you don't have to introduce entirely new track and new trains. Please accept that it takes time for our people to revolutionise Britain's rail network. Perhaps in future you could consider giving them some encouragement, to balance the negatives, whilst they are doing so. Richard Branson, Chairman, Virgin Group of Companies.

HAVE heard Virgin Trains' claim that Britain's nationalised railways have been under-capitalised for the past 30 years, but which has been in power for most of that time? Might it be the one of which Richard Branson has been such an enthusiastic acolyte and from whose policies he has benefited so much? Does he have any sympathy for why other countries' rail networks are so much better than ours? If he did, he might

realise that elsewhere railways are either nationalised or heavily state-supported. Other nations recognise that railways are a national asset, and that they may also hold the key to substantially reducing greenhouse gases and urban congestion. Nor should Branson rely too much on the argument that the rolling stock on Virgin trains is outdated and decrepit. The high speed diesel units, which form the backbone of Virgin Cross-Country fleet are identical to those operated with great success and convenience by Midland mainline and Great North Eastern. The problem might well be the management, not the hardware. Karl Marx saw railways as the prime example of laissez-faire capitalism; it looks like they may yet epitomise its demise. Dr Neil Burgess, Lincoln.

YOUR feature on Virgin Trains understandably did not say much about Railtrack. Operating companies such as Virgin appear to be very shy about attributing blame to Railtrack; it is almost a conspiracy of silence. Yet it is Railtrack which is responsible for the poor track, leading to slow speeds, and for the point and signal failures that cause horrendous delays. Virgin and the other opera-

tors just have to take the flak. Railtrack was floated as a private company as a whim, it is not malicious, act of the last government, despite earlier ministerial statements that it would remain in the public sector "for the foreseeable future". While not receiving a direct subsidy, it feeds voraciously off the subsidies contracted to the operating companies. The so-called subsidy to Virgin is more accurately a contractual payment for running the train services. If another bidder would have been given the contract.

THE Railtrack response to Amelia Gentleman (Travelers face holiday rail chaos, November 13) does a disservice to our colleagues in Virgin Trains. The problems she encountered in planning her Christmas journey are down to us here at Railtrack and not Virgin, as she was led to believe. Railtrack is responsible for providing the schedules for Christmas to the train operators, so that they can assist people who wish to book in advance. We are working hard to finalise the information and expect it to be completed in the next few days. Philip Dewhurst, Director, Corporate Affairs, Railtrack.

Scotland: how the debate should devolve

YOUR leader on Scottish devolution (November 13) captures some of the potential for problems facing Blair and Scotland's Labour north of the border. Firstly, the Scottish Parliament elections with a new proportional election system will be the first competitive contest in Scotland for over two generations. This will require a new kind of politics from all involved, but particularly Labour and SNP. The former, used to winning piles of safe West of Scotland seats with no serious challenge, and the latter, previously content

to play the role of opportunist oppositionism. Secondly, anyone looking between now and next year's elections for serious policy debate on the future of Scotland will be disappointed. The contest will be shaped by on-message "spin", presidential politics and rival "visions", but it is the duty of those of us in Scotland's small party community to challenge politicians to address themselves to what difference the Parliament can make. Thirdly, Scottish politics have been defined for more

than 20 years by an obsession with constitutional issues to the exclusion of economic and social policy. Scotland's parties have chosen to differentiate themselves from each other on the constitution, while agreeing broadly on economic and social issues. Scotland post-devolution, if it is to have added value, has to shift from an obsession with the constitution and on to economic and social issues. Gerry Hassan, Director, Centre for Scottish Public Policy, Edinburgh.

Visual popcorn or food for the soul: British movie-makers on the options

AT LAST it has been said (British film is sick, November 15): film-making in Britain at the moment is obsessed with commercial viability and sensational content and is stultifyingly orthodox, both in film language and audience expectations. In Friday Review, you separate different types of music, classical and rock and sections to themselves. Could not the same be done with film, so that "movies", whose prime object is putting bums on seats, could have a section of their own, and "cinema", films whose prime object is true artistic expression, could also have a section? Could someone like Jonathan Romney be put in charge of the latter please? That way, I feel, that true cinema would soon be putting more bums on

seats. There is a renaissance going on in cinema: it is happening with new directors in Europe, the Middle East, the Far East. It can happen in Britain too, where there are still film-makers who care about true cinema, but whose hands are tied by a largely financially illiterate film-financing establishment. Roger Ollerhead, Beccles, Suffolk.

THOUGHT it risible that Jonathan Romney should claim that British film is sick because of Lack, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels, Sliding Doors and Mark Herman's Little Voice, on the basis that these films "please the audience they target". Am I missing something here? Is there something wrong with films

pleasing their audience? Similarly, is there something wrong with experimental films just because they don't please wide audiences? I think not. I'm afraid his rant made me think of Mr Romney as a terrified, pseudo-intellectual version of Mr Whitehouse. Elizabeth Karlsson, Producer, Little Voice, London.

MY SINCERE apologies to Jonathan Romney for making a film people enjoy. What a fool I've been. In future I shall try harder to make films like his desperate, ill-informed, contradictory, ill-informed, pseudo-intellectual and fundamentally very sad. Mark Herman, Director, Little Voice, York.



At least he came clean

CONTRARY to the suggestion in your headline, Peter Slade is not a doctor in the sense of someone who practices medicine ("Scandal" of sex abuse doctor free to practice, November 14). Before he became a professor of clinical psychology he was addressed as Dr Slade by virtue of his PhD and not by virtue of his being a registered medical practitioner. I have known Peter as a geographically mobile colleague for over 20 years and feel duty bound to record the significance of his contribution to my own specialist field of eating disorders. I am sure it is the value of his past work which has prompted colleagues to let him keep his British Psychological Society membership and Fellowship. This seems to me to be a compassionate and wise decision which will assist the recovery of sick men.

Peter Slade is a skilled, formerly highly respected and extremely experienced psychologist with an unrivalled knowledge of eating disorders. In the seventies and eighties, he, his research students and volunteers at the Anorexia Aid group — and the Eating Disorders Association support group since 1989 — have been the only resource for sufferers in the Liverpool area, which used to be one of the black spots for these illnesses. For years there was no senior colleague in the locality so there was no chance of

supervision or peer group support. He carried too heavy a burden for many years and for the last four or five his wife's cancer has robbed him of her support. The multiple pressures he has shouldered finally broke him and he behaved "inappropriately and in a sexual manner" with several patients. Having treated over 650 eating disorder patients over the last 25 years, I know he is not the first and he will not be the last to offend in this way. But as denial, cover-up and hiding behind one's colleagues are the usual response to such offences by the very small minority who commit them, please do not cause any more damage to the one man who has come clean. Jill Welbourne, Bristol.

IT IS a pity that your reporter failed to include the remainder of my statement on behalf of the British Psychological Society. I said that the Society is seeking legislation to register the profession so that the public is properly protected. And that our Council will be looking at the Peter Slade case at its next meeting. Dr Ingrid Lunt, President, British Psychological Society.

Please include a full postal address. We may add letters; shorter ones are more likely to be used. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used. Please provide a reference to the relevant article.

The Iraq crisis sparks a little local conflict

THE NEXT time that Tam Dalyell decides to be a mouthpiece for Iraqi anti-semitism (First Person, November 16), could the Guardian direct him elsewhere? After repeating the "fact" that the Catholic Madeleine Albright is Jewish, along with Cohen, Levy and Berger, he poses a rhetorical question: "What should a gentile say to Israel who ask whether it is fair that decisions to bomb should be made by those whose agenda is linked with the perceived interests of Israel?"

This gentile is offended by the suggestion that those public servants are part of an international Zionist conspiracy. What would Mr Dalyell say to people who thought that all Britons were royalists or Falklands war enthusiasts? Or has this century not taught us enough about treating each according to his ethnicity? David Voss, Liverpool.

AN AITKEN was wrong to describe the El Shifa factory in Sudan, flattered by American Tomahawks last August, as "little more than a corner chemist's shop" (Bomber Bill, November 16). It was the largest and most efficient pharmaceutical factory in Sudan, supplying 50 per cent of the country's medicines. Whether or not it was secretly manufacturing a chemical intermediate in the production of nerve gas, its standard products ranged from anti-TB drugs and antibiotics to paracetamol and cough syrup. It also produced the anti-malarial drug, chloroquine. Malaria is a killer disease endemic in Sudan. The remaining pharmaceutical factories in Sudan have risen to the crisis by increasing and diversifying their own production. None, however, is producing chloroquine. Elizabeth Bingham, London.



At 16, Mary ran away from a life of abuse. Today she is homeless. Could you sleep easy on Christmas Eve knowing she was shivering in a bus shelter? You can help keep Mary, and thousands of vulnerable people like her, safe and warm over Christmas. With £25 from you, Crisis can provide a warm bed, hot meals, clean clothes and someone to talk to at one of our shelters.

As the days count down to Christmas, nearly 10,000 homeless people are counting on Crisis. We're counting on you. Our service depends on public donations. So please send your £25 today — in time to help us buy the bedding, food and clothes we need to bring Mary in from the cold.

Countdown to Christmas

Yes, I'll keep homeless people warm:

☐ £15 ☐ £25 ☐ £50 ☐ £250* other £

I enclose a cheque made payable to Crisis. OR debit my:

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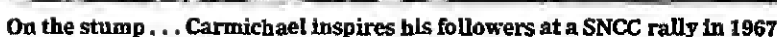
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Black power's road to freedom



He was repeatedly arrested and jailed — he said he lost count after his 32nd sentence — and endured some severe beatings from warders, particularly during a seven-week term in a Mississippi prison. But he held to his convictions and, after graduating with a degree in philosophy in 1964, enrolled in the Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC), then dispatched



On the line . . . and pickets a U

Fight for Freedom
... (in Viet Nam)

(Die Nigger Die—
fast enough)

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—you can't die
in the ghettos.)

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anti-Vietnam leaflets (right)

Carmichael was part of the extraordinary group of students from Howard University who made up a large part of SNCC's organisers. Their courage and skill shaped the politics of my generation of northern white students.

Charles

A sensuous smile for France

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In Abel Gance's *Lucrece Borgia* (1935) she gained stardom with a nude bathing scene, which had to be shot 19 times to appease the censors.



While her old colleague Renaud pursued the avant-garde in pieces by Beckett and Duras, Feuillère appeared in *Le Lion en hiver* (1973), *La Visite de la vieille dame* (1976), *Le Bateau pour Lipala* (1977) and *La Dernière nuit d'été* (1982). She realised her ambition that she had cherished since the 1940s, and played the Duchess in Anouilh's *Léonora* in 1985, a hit

Below the church is St Aldhelm's Well, a spring with a stone basin where the saint is said to have recited psalms whilst immersed. The spring is the source of the River Sheppey that winds down through a gently pastoral valley. Aldhelm died sitting on a piece of

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Feuillère ... 'like seeing a goddess for the first time', wrote Harold Hobson

Patrick O'Connor
 Edwige Feuillère, actress, born
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Analysis World trade

It's all a matter of balance

The dispute between the United States and Europe over bananas is only one sign of heightening tensions among the world's great traders. Could the destructive commercial wars of the Thirties be repeated, **Charlotte Denny** asks.

FREE trade faces its most testing time for 50 years. The trade deficit run by the biggest economy in the world, the American, has become a fixture. It may get a lot worse, giving space to the politicians who find it electorally appealing to blame foreign imports for displacing American jobs. So far, most of the Asian countries hit by the economic storms of the past 13 months or so have been busy trying to recover their financial stability, but they have lacked the wherewithal to get their exports to world markets. Now the massive devaluations of their currencies is about to kick in, delivering a huge boost to their competitiveness and making their exports more attractive.

But the trade story of recent days has been bananas. Of all the issues to provoke a war, bananas must be one of the oddest. The European Union and the United States are engaged in a fruit which neither of them exports and which in world trade terms, is fairly insignificant. Ostensibly the row is about a scheme giving banana producers from Europe's former colonies in the Caribbean special access to European markets. Unfair on Latin American banana producers (including some big American brand names) said the Americans, and last week they threatened to slap 100 per cent surcharges on European exports to the United States if the EU didn't change its rules.

The EU is naturally indignant. These days the World Trade Organisation (to which of course both the EU countries and the US belong) is supposed to police global trade and unilateral retaliation against perceived infringements isn't its rule-book. It's as if the US authorised a pre-emptive missile strike against Iraq without Security Council approval. If the American threat were to be realised, billions of pounds worth of trade would be disrupted.

Europe and the US were discussing closer economic ties. Now relations are distinctly chilly. The EU trade commis-

sioner, Sir Leon Brittan, has accused the Americans of being in the pocket of the multinationals which run the banana plantations. Meanwhile the US trade representative Charlene Barshefsky says the US has come to the end of legal procedure and will enforce its rights.

Only this weekend there was a further sign of tension between the world's largest trading blocs. The Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation talks ended in collapse after some very undiplomatic exchanges between the United States and Japan. Apec members had promised to introduce a free trade zone by the year 2010 but the first step on the way — tariff reductions in nine key sectors — was thwarted by Japan's refusal to open forestry and fishing to foreign competition. The Americans said Japan was conducting chequebook diplomacy while the Japanese described the American accusation as evil. If brinkmanship between the world's three largest trading blocs makes good theatre, the timing of the row is more than a little unfortunate. Analysts expect a wave of cheap goods to hit global markets this autumn as the Asian countries pick themselves up. The American trade deficit is already at a nine-year high, so who is going to absorb those cars, textiles, electronic goods and other east Asian exports? Once again, the Americans charge the European countries which are running a trade surplus with not playing their part.

Meanwhile, the global financial instability which toppled the Asian currencies last year is by no means over. Last Thursday, the International Monetary Fund had to step in to help the Brazilian government to protect its currency, the real, from speculation. Some commentators think that in the current economic climate, all the world needs to revisit the great slump of the 1930s is for an American-European trade war to spark a wave of global protectionism. It was the Smoot-Hawley Act penalising imports into America which set off a worldwide round of tariff increases in 1931, mak-

ing a dire economic situation even worse and creating the conditions for the Depression.

This was not what the West had in mind when it concluded the mammoth Uruguay round of trade negotiations before establishing the World Trade Organisation in 1994. The Geneva-based body was given the power to legislate over disputes and coordinate new rounds of negotiations aimed at bringing down barriers to trade throughout the world.

Economists have been warning the flag for free trade ever since Adam Smith, who observed that "if a foreign country can supply us with a commodity cheaper than we ourselves can make it, better buy it off them with some part of the produce of our own industry employed in a way in which we have some advantage" (1). The theory is that if each country specialises in what it does best and exports some of the results, it can buy a greater and wider variety of goods from the rest of the world with the income than it could possibly produce itself. This insight was one of the most influential tenets in classical economics. But it still suggests that countries can only benefit from trade if they can produce some product or service more efficiently than other countries.

It was the other founding father, David Ricardo, who refined Smith's observation and came up with one of the most powerful concepts in economics — comparative advantage (2). Ricardo observed that it made sense for countries to specialise in what they were relatively better at than other countries, even if they did not possess an absolute advantage. If a country is relatively better at producing wine than wool — it has to give up less resources in order to produce more wine — then it makes to specialise in viticulture. This is true even if that country were the world's most efficient producer of wool.

Classical economic theory observes that the point of

trade is to promote imports — the opposite of how most politicians appear to think. An export is a way of producing the revenue necessary to purchase an import, which is worth doing because it is more efficient than producing the good we are importing ourselves. In terms of classical trade theory it would make

sense for one country to unilaterally pull down its tariff walls, even if other countries didn't follow suit. Consumers would benefit from cheaper prices and producers would be forced to re-allocate their resources more efficiently if they were outpriced by cheaper goods from elsewhere in the world.



David Ricardo: the point of trade is to maximise imports, not exports

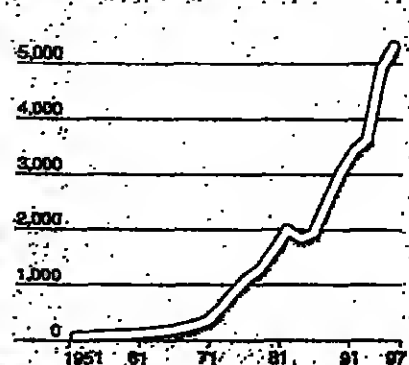
Hey — big trader

Tri-lateral merchandise trade between the US, Japan and the EU represents up to 88 per cent of those countries' total global trade in goods for 1997. The EU (excluding its internal trade) is the largest global exporter, \$623bn, while the US is the largest importer, \$688bn. Of the three, only the US runs a global trade deficit.



Global highs

World merchandise exports, \$bn



Merchandise trade

\$bn, 1997



Exports Imports

Japan EU 15 US

Balance: \$62.35bn \$14.18bn \$68.17bn

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Japan EU 15 US

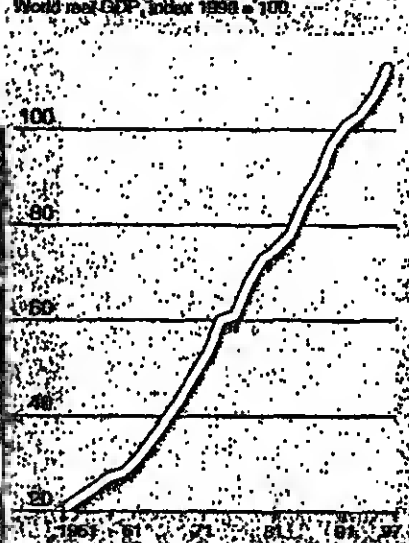
Balance: \$62.35bn \$14.18bn \$68.17bn

Exports Imports

Japan EU 15 US

A growing economy

World real GDP, index 1980 = 100



Going bananas

North America and the EU are at each other's throats over bananas despite the fact that neither region actually grows them. That is left to poor Caribbean countries like Cuba, below, where workers harvest the crop on a plantation near Finca del Rio.



large losses and a large group of consumers who make small gains, many politicians find it easier to defend the status quo or emphasise the advantages in terms of export markets. To get away from the influence of the business lobby, trade negotiations are carried out behind closed doors. But as the banana case makes clear, negotiations within the World Trade Organisation are not immune from the influence of large corporations. The US government took Europe's banana trade to the WTO within 24 hours of Clinton Brands making a \$500,000 donation to the Democratic Party.

DEDEFENDERS of the WTO process say that despite its flaws, it is better than having no rules at all. The alternative to having the rules set and enforced multilaterally is a return to a system where the most powerful trading nations call all the shots. The WTO's role in policing the global trading system is likely to come under great strain over the next year. As America's trade deficit — already at a five year high — balloons, its industrial heartland will start to feel the pain. The candidates who are already manoeuvring for position in the run-up to the 2000 Presidential elections will find that protectionism is an easy card to play to please the voters with. Japan remains too weak to provide a motor for growth in the Asia-Pacific region and even the Chinese economy shows signs of slowing.

In this situation, Europe's position on trade is critical. As one of the few regions still growing, the EU may be forced to let its trade balance with the rest of the world worsen in order to help to pull other countries out of a slump. But with relations between the EU and the US souring the chances of international co-ordination on the issue seem to be slim. A world trade war in the style of the 1930s may seem a less immediate threat this week than another Gulf war. But the first shots may just have been fired.

Sources: (1) Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations, Book IV; (2) David Ricardo, On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation; (3) Paul Krugman Making Sense of the Competitiveness Debate, Oxford Review of Economic Policy, Vol. 12, No. 3 p17. Graphics sources: WTO; Census; US Census Bureau; Graphics: Finbar Sheehy. Research: Matthew Keating. Charlotte Denny is the Guardian's economics correspondent.

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FinanceGuardian

1,800 redundancies and £80m losses forecast as prices continue to fall More steel jobs threatened

Terry Macalister

B RITISH Steel warned last night that it planned to cut more jobs in the next six months and might shut down plants for an extended break over Christmas in an effort to avoid financial losses.

City experts predicted that the redundancy figure could reach 1,800 in the next half year but said that would not be enough to prevent British Steel crashing to an £80 million deficit by March.

Shares in the former state-owned group fell 8.5p to 100p as chairman and chief executive, Sir Brian Moffat, blamed a massive surge in cut-price imports from the Far East for the fastest deterioration in prices he could remember.

And, in an ominous prediction from the heart of Britain's manufacturing sector, Sir Brian said he expected national output to move into negative figures in 1999 and urged further cuts in interest rates to offset the damaging impact of the strong pound.

Sir Brian said the recent weakening in sterling should reap benefits towards the end of the year but insisted that

the overvalued pound had undermined the group's UK customers' competitive position at home and abroad for two years. Unveiling a fall in first half pre-tax profits from £143 million to £108 million year on year, the group said it had made 1,400 redundancies in the six months adding, "that will accelerate in the second half."

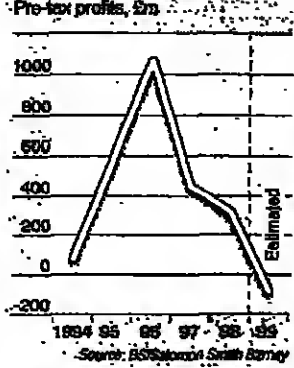
Up till now employees have been dismissed through early retirement and voluntary redundancy, but officials admit that this policy could have to change as the speed of cuts increases. The company is already shedding 10,000 staff, mainly middle managers, over five years.

This brought an angry reaction from the steel unions. Lord Brookman, general secretary of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, said: "We will negotiate on job losses but we will not accept compulsory redundancies."

But City analysts said British Steel might have to chop over 7,000 jobs by 2001.

Terence Sinclair, analyst with Salomon Smith Barney, has pencilled in a loss estimate of £80 million for this year's full results. "British Steel has no option but to reduce personnel."

British Steel



European competitors have already announced plans to shut down plants for between one week and four over Christmas. British Steel says it will take a decision on whether to follow suit at the end of this month.

Much depends on the future of steel prices, which have collapsed in some sectors since September. If this continues Sir Brian said it would lead to "losses for the full year, particularly if pressure intensifies on sales volume."

Prices in some types of steel had fallen by 30 per cent in the last two to three months,

he said, although on average it was between 5 per cent and 15 per cent.

British Steel is hoping that anti-dumping moves by European Union producers, to be tabled in the next few days, will frighten Korea, Taiwan and others into cutting their exports. The foreign stake in the European market has grown from 10 per cent to a record 20 per cent.

But there is also apprehension that earlier anti-dumping moves in the US could chase Asian exporters out of North America and into Europe. The problems stem from the collapse in demand for steel in South-east Asia.

During the boom period the Tiger economies increased their demand to 25 per cent of the world. The regional financial crisis has cut this demand to some 7 per cent, leading producers to look for new homes for their exports.

Despite the difficulties, British Steel remains confident. It plans to hold its full year dividend at 10p and to improve its already high productivity levels. Although its Anglo-Swedish subsidiary, Avesta Sheffield, is already in loss, British Steel has expressed an interest in buying assets in Poland.

Koreans 'undercut European shipyards'

Julia Wolf in Brussels

THE European Union yesterday accused Korea of using international Monetary Fund aid to undercut prices charged by European shipbuilders.

The EU's industry commissioner, Martin Bangemann, said Korean yards were selling ships for as much as 30 per cent less than European producers.

Mr Bangemann, who was speaking to EU industry ministers, attributed the price cuts to government subsidies, including aid paid by the IMF to help Korea out of the Asian economic crisis.

EU officials said Mr Bangemann told the ministers that Korean shipbuilders faced severe difficulties in

the first half of this year, with several yards in danger of closing down. Since July, however, Korea's shipbuilding sector had boosted production considerably and the country's yards had won contracts for cruise liners that usually went to Europe.

Other EU ministers supported Mr Bangemann's call for the issue to be raised with the IMF and the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

The EU ministers widened the drive to fight state aid yesterday, giving the commission greater power to vet payments to European companies and the power to raid companies during state aid investigations and demand immediate repayment of subsidies.

A £25 million Government grant to UK truck maker LDV and Daewoo of Korea was approved by the commission, clearing the way for a strategic partnership between the two companies.

Birmingham-based LDV will now develop a new range of medium vans, which will create up to 2,000 jobs.

Notebook

Tokyo slumbers on feather bed



Edited by Alex Brummer

EACH successive Japanese prime minister feels it incumbent to deliver an ever bigger expansion package. Now it is the turn of Keizo Obuchi, who inherited a poor hand from his predecessor, Ryutaro Hashimoto, despite the predictions that his stimulatory measures would see off recession.

The need for something dramatic is obvious: output is predicted to decline by 1.8 per cent in the year to March. The banking system is still in transition from insolvency to stability; hard currency is flowing overseas and bankruptcies continued their ascent with a 5 per cent rise in October.

Yet the Liberal Democratic government, while willing to indulge in gimmicks such as the 700 billion yen (£3.5 billion) of gift certificates for young people and the elderly, is standing firm against cuts in consumption taxes. This despite evidence from the department stores, which voluntarily discounted sales taxes in recent months, that such measures feed straight through to the bottom line and encourage consumption.

The fear apparently is that to lower consumption tax would amount to a significant loss of face.

In July 1996 — and could prove the most significant. The other changes wrought were the consolidation of the cable industry under the Cable & Wireless Communications banner and clearing up the relationship with Beijing after the Hong Kong takeover.

The current phase of C&W expansion is largely opportunistic. But then, successful businesses often are. As soon as it became clear that the WorldCom takeover of MCI in the US would receive regulatory approval, provided that the Internet facilities were disposed of, Mr Brown moved into high gear to earn his company a place in the fast-growing world of data transmission — an area also earmarked by BT for its expansion.

The core of its European expansion — eventually to cost \$1 billion — will be based on the leasing of high-speed lines from Hermes Europe Railnet and the purchase, for \$100 million, of Global Crossing Systems, which has fibre-optic cables connecting 18 European cities. Through a low-cost investment, by telecom standards, C&W hopes eventually to link its new capacity in Europe with its undersea cable to the Pacific and North America, forming a global network for multi-national corporations. What makes this particularly useful is C&W's access to the know-how and technology it acquired from MCI, which will allow it to provide dedicated Internet access for businesses.

Putting the pieces together to provide an integrated global service will be difficult. C&W is still struggling to overcome the historic difficulties of its UK cable network, C&W, and this was Mr Brown's first eye-catching move. But this time round there is no road-digging required, C&W is interested in providing the network opportunities, not the local circuits. Given the flux in the industry and the expansion opportunities, the European push looks like another smart move.

Levene's list

THE Lord Mayor of the City of London (to give the post its full mantle) will face many challenges in the coming year, not least a rival elected Mayor of London with real powers and a democratic mandate.

This has led the new Lord Mayor, Lord (Peter) Levene, who played host to the Prime Minister at the Guildhall last night, to do some thinking about his role. He is aiming to be a loud voice for the City, noting, for instance, that some 30,000 people will be at work as the new year dawns, to ensure that London is ready for euro trading on January 4.

As importantly, Lord Levene also appears interested in the financial services revolution and the new technologies on which the City's comparative advantage will be tested. It is a bold agenda and a far cry from the ceremonial overkill often associated with the Mansion House.

Cable boldness

ANY thoughts that telecom group Cable & Wireless lacks a strategic edge will be dispensed by the company's European expansion plans.

This is the third leg of the transformation engineered by chief executive Dick Brown since he arrived on the scene

C&W fast track to Europe

Chris Barrie, Media Business Correspondent

THE telecoms company Cable & Wireless yesterday accelerated plans to develop a global Internet business when it unveiled a £500 million programme designed to establish a high-speed network across Europe's principal cities.

The five-year strategy is designed to catapult C&W into the corporate market by enabling it to offer high-speed data transmission services to businesses.

The investment will also connect its Internet business — bought from US telecoms company MCI for \$1.75 billion (£1.05 billion) — to European customers.

Stephen Pettit, C&W executive director of global business, said the company was gaining £130 million in revenue from its European operations. That was expected to double every year for the next five years, to some £4.2 billion. This was realistic given the overall size of the European market, at \$170 billion, he said.

The investment puts C&W on collision course with MCI WorldCom, which said earlier this year it would invest \$1 billion over the next 12 months in its high-speed network outside the US — mainly in Europe. British Telecom is also attempting to build a high-speed network linking the US and Europe through a joint venture with the US telecoms group AT&T.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SETS

Australia 2.50	Germany 2.718	Malaysia 6.31	Singapore 2.88
Austria 15.00	Greece 454.42	Malta 0.606	South Africa 9.15
Belgium 55.88	Hong Kong 12.50	Netherlands 3.048	Spain 228.62
Canada 2.51	India 70.46	New Zealand 2.97	Sweden 13.11
Cyprus 0.799	Ireland 1.082	Norway 12.81	Switzerland 2.24
Denmark 10.36	Israel 8.88	Portugal 274.81	Turkey 470.870
Finland 8.27	Italy 2.887	Saudi Arabia 6.06	USA 1.685
France 9.06			

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Finance chiefs aim to unify EU tax

Ian Traynor in Bonn

GERMANY and France moved yesterday to dovetail macroeconomic policymaking six weeks ahead of the launch of the euro and said they wanted common European Union levels of corporation tax by the middle of next year.

Declaring that the EU was poised to enter a "new phase" in concerted economic policymaking, the powerful finance ministers of the two countries sought to forge a common front on employment, taxation and macroeconomic policy in the hope that the pan-European policies would be embraced by the rest of the EU.

Oskar Lafontaine and Dominique Strauss-Kahn also said they were drafting a joint paper proposing target bands for the exchange rates of the dollar, yen, and the euro, in an attempt to tame volatility on the foreign exchanges. But analysts said there were clear signs Mr Lafontaine was backtracking on his original plans.

The meeting in Bonn of the Franco-German economic council, aimed at preparing an agenda for a Franco-German summit at the end of the month, was also attended by both countries' central bankers, Hans Tietmeyer and Jean-Claude Trichet.

Since becoming German finance minister last month, Mr Lafontaine has been at loggerheads with the Bundesbank, the German central bank, and its governor, Mr Tietmeyer, over monetary policy, calling for interest rate cuts to foster jobs and growth.

Both men continued to spar in public yesterday, with Mr



German finance minister Oskar Lafontaine (left) and his French counterpart, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, in Bonn yesterday PHOTOGRAPH: TIM BRUNENBERGER

Tietmeyer insisting mass unemployment in Germany and France was due to structural problems, while Mr Lafontaine maintained it was also caused by economic and cyclical factors.

"Monetary policy still has

the scope to promote jobs and growth," said Mr Lafontaine, who has taken a critical panning for seeking to pressure the Bundesbank, but who stresses he is not interfering with the bank's independence. He claimed yesterday

his comments were aimed at the new European Central Bank, not the Bundesbank.

While Mr Tietmeyer said that exchange rates were "relatively stable" at the moment, and that the German mark's rate to the dollar and the yen

were "at a level with which we can live", the two finance ministers said they were drafting a joint memorandum on exchange rate target zones.

All the signs are that Germany and France are preparing to launch an ambitious

drive to "harmonise" tax, fiscal and macroeconomic policymaking across the EU. They want standard rates of corporation tax and interest yields by the EU summit in Cologne in June, which closes Germany's EU presidency.

Merseyside bus drivers get free ride to £20,000 each

Former home of industrial militancy shows how privatisation can benefit masses, says Nicholas Bannister

BUS drivers in once-militant Merseyside are to share in a capitalist's dream — a £20,000 return on free shares.

When the local bus operations were privatised by the Merseyside Passenger Transport Authority in 1992 for a nominal £1, the 2,500 bus drivers received free shares in the new company, MTL.

The new management returned the company to profit but was forced to postpone a flotation earlier this

year because of adverse market conditions.

Instead it has decided to reward its shareholders by returning £48 million to them through a corporate restructuring which will also benefit employees of the rail companies which MTL acquired in 1995 and 1997.

The bus drivers, who run the fleet of 1,000 buses owned by MTL North, the subsidiary which provides bus services in and around the Merseyside area, are to get a special pay-

ment of about £20,000 on the average shareholding of 33,000 shares.

The 3,400 employees of the rail subsidiaries, Merseyrail Electrics and Northern Spirit, will have their share options converted into shares, and end up with an average shareholding of 250 shares each.

Peter Coombes, MTL's chairman and chief executive, said yesterday that the company had not abandoned its plans to go public.

"We are confident in the company's potential for future development and our aim remains to seek a flotation in two to three years' time, if that continues to be in shareholders' interests."

When MTL announced plans for a flotation, it told shareholders that they might expect to receive up to £30,000 each.

Some of them subsequently got into financial difficulties by spending much of the anticipated proceeds only to find that the flotation was later called off.

A series of events, including an Office of Fair Trading inquiry into allegations of anti-competitive practices by bus companies in the North-west and a number of one-day strikes at Merseyrail Electrics, made flotation unattractive.

Subsequent attempts to find a buyer for MTL also failed with nobody coming up with

an offer which the board felt represented a fair value for the company.

The two institutions that backed the original MTL buy-out — ECI Ventures and ICG — are to exchange their warrants for just under 20 per cent of the shares in the new holding company, MTL Trust Holdings.

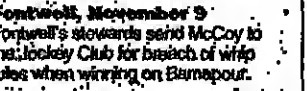
GB Rail, which operates train services in east Anglia, saw first-half profits more than halved from £2.13 million to £977,000 after a £4 million cut in Government subsidies.

The company's chairman, Lord Sheppard, announcing a 12.5 per cent rise in passenger volumes, called for a better trading performance as substitu-




ties would be cut even more in the coming years.

150 من الاموال




BY	141	151
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Guardian  **INTERACTIVE**



■ DASHING CAVALIER, 2-yr 2, **Ipswich** (Garratt) 10-11, 12 rdn
 ■ **Tot**: 1:27.75, 22.93
 ■ **EAA, TD, CSF**: Dti 10
QUADROPOTI: CSF: 40.

■ Tony Pulley yesterday made Darlington, who scored at odds of 8-1 in Waterbury, his nap selection. He further recommended, taking the heat early-morning price of 16-1. The horse made all the running under Pat McCabe, who was later banned for four days for excessive use of the whip.




	COMMENTARY	RESULTS
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ABBOT	142	152
D	143	153
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McCoy is made the whipping boy, page 13
Hill warns on Silverstone, page 15

White Shark back with a splash, page 13
Wimbledon in the money, page 15

SportsGuardian

Crawley beaten up by 'racist drunk'

Vivek Chaudhary
Sports Correspondent

JOHAN CRAWLEY became the first major England casualty of the Ashes tour of Australia after he was beaten up by a drunk while returning to his hotel.

Crawley, who had been taking part in a match in Cairns against the Queensland state team over the weekend, was set upon by an unknown assailant just after 11pm as he returned alone to the hotel.

The Lancashire batsman had been out during the evening with his England teammates and Queensland players. Crawley was verbally abused and punched by the man and sustained cuts and bruises to his face.

According to an unconfirmed report, the drunkard buried racial abuse at Crawley after recognising him as an England batsman. Crawley's injuries are not likely to affect his contention for a place in the England team for the opening Test in Brisbane starting this Friday.

The tour manager Graham Gooch said he had spoken with Crawley and that following discussions, England officials had decided not to inform police and will not be taking any action.

Gooch said: "John was naturally upset by the matter but other than the cuts and bruises to his face, he is fine and fully fit."

England won the match against Queensland by one wicket with the last pair Robert Croft and Alan Mullally guiding them home. Crawley's Lancashire team-mate Mike Atherton, who is suffering from a back problem, batted but was stumped for one.

England scrape home, page 15



Out of the woods... Dion Dublin, watching the Thames roll by at Bisham Abbey, is set to win his fourth cap tomorrow. David Lacey, page 29 TOM JENKINS

Spurs step up Sutton chase

Ian Ross

TOTTENHAM's manager George Graham is set to make a combined bid of £10.5 million for Blackburn's Chris

Sutton and Tim Sherwood. Graham was told recently that neither player would be allowed to leave Ewood Park but he is refusing to take no for an answer.

He tried unsuccessfully to sign the 25-year-old Sutton

last month and his predecessor at White Hart Lane, Christian Gross, had a £2.4 million offer for Sherwood, 29, rejected 10 weeks ago.

Although Sutton has never indicated a desire to leave Blackburn, Sherwood has

made little attempt to conceal the fact that he would at least like permission to meet Spurs.

The gulf between Sherwood and his manager Roy Hodgson widened considerably at the weekend after he was dismissed at Manchester United. Hodgson blamed Sherwood for the loss of the three points and indicated that he would be fined.

Liverpool's new manager Gerard Houllier got into the swing of things yesterday by spending his day deoying various pieces of speculation.

Houllier insisted he was not about to sell the England striker Robbie Fowler to Arsenal for £12 million and that his senior players were definitely not on the verge of revolt in the wake of Roy Evans's resignation last week.

Robbie knows exactly how much I rely on him," Houllier said. "There is a problem over his contract, which expires the summer after next, but he knows we want to keep

him and that we will do all we can to keep him."

Houllier conceded that he was irritated by the "sheer lies" of reports that he had lost the support of his players. "Paul Ince came to see me and said he's spoken to the lads and that they were 100 per cent behind me, no problem," he said.

Houllier's spirits were lifted by the news that Michael Owen could be fit to face the Premiership leaders Aston Villa on Saturday.

Owen was told he would miss at least a fortnight after damaging a hamstring last week but is making a swifter recovery than expected.

Everton's manager Walter Smith has been informed he is unlikely to be allowed to buy any more players in the foreseeable future. Smith, who has spent £19 million since the summer, had told his chairman Peter Johnson that he would like to buy at least two more players before Christmas.

Ignoble art boxes itself into a corner



Jim White

CAN the world wait until 16 January? Can breath be bated that long? Will we be able to contain ourselves through such a hiatus before Mike Tyson steps into the ring once again, the redeemer of his sport, ready to take his rightful place in our consciousness after his lonely exile in the wilderness?

Frankly, I think we possibly will. I have a strange feeling that I am not the only person who has long since lost interest in the antics of Tyson, that I am not alone in being bored to the edge of stupefaction by the ridiculous circus that his life has become and that I will be among the many who decide not to take up generous invitations to pay-to-view his new year comeback fight.

It is believed that the ear-chewing, road-raging sport-though I probably wouldn't call him that to his face—is once more anxious to box because he is short of money. And that his long-term partner and recent enemy Don King could use the money too, so they have put their spots aside and joined forces to engineer a return to the ring.

Quite how two men who have squeezed tens of millions out of their sport over the past decade can be on their uppers is a subject worthy for a thesis in economics, to be placed on the shelf alongside works on How Britain Squandered her North Sea Bounty and The Duchess of York's Guide to Household Budgeting.

But sadly there is no doubt the pair are right to feel the fresh scent of dollars in their nostrils. In March, Lennox Lewis fights Evander Holyfield in a unification fight for the world heavyweight title. Don King's hair is already spinning at the thought of Tyson taking on the winner of that.

So some pitiful sap, ill-equipped to fight Tyson, will be contracted to stand in a ring on January 16. His almost inevitable defeat will allow the erstwhile champ to jump the queue of contenders and line up a shot at the unified title next autumn.

One wonders why no one in control of boxing can allow some dignity back into the sport. But it seems everyone is

as blinded by the thought of money as the main participants.

Still, it gives the lads at Sky TV's promotion department—who cheerily sell Coventry against Everton as the biggest scrap since God kicked Satan out of paradise—time to get in the gym and pump up their hyperbole muscles to sell the big one.

With heavyweight boxing in such a condition, it is a propitious piece of timing this week to publish *Jim A Little Special: A Muhammad Ali Reader*, a book which puts the whole farrago into perspective. It is hard, in the present circumstances, to imagine what a figure Ali cut in his prime. But here is a book, littered with brilliant offerings from the finest writers in modern America—Tom Wolfe, Hunter S Thompson, George Plimpton—to remind us that he was a giant, not just in boxing but in life.

It is impossible to imagine anyone being inspired as they were with Ali to follow Tyson's every move, religiously to take down his thoughts about politics, race and war; in short to take him seriously. Back in the Sixties and Seventies, Ali held court to a glittering platoon of Boswells, each trying to ensure they would be the ones to make the ultimate record of his place in posterity. Would Norman Mailer, for instance, feel moved to write this of Mike Tyson? "He is the awfulest embodiment of human intelligence we have had yet, he is the very spirit of the 20th century." Probably not.

Nor are the chances high of Mailer, Wolfe and chums being ringside on January 16. Especially not when, in a move indicative of the whole parlous state of the sport, a press conference to announce Tyson's opponent, which was scheduled for today, was cancelled at the last moment.

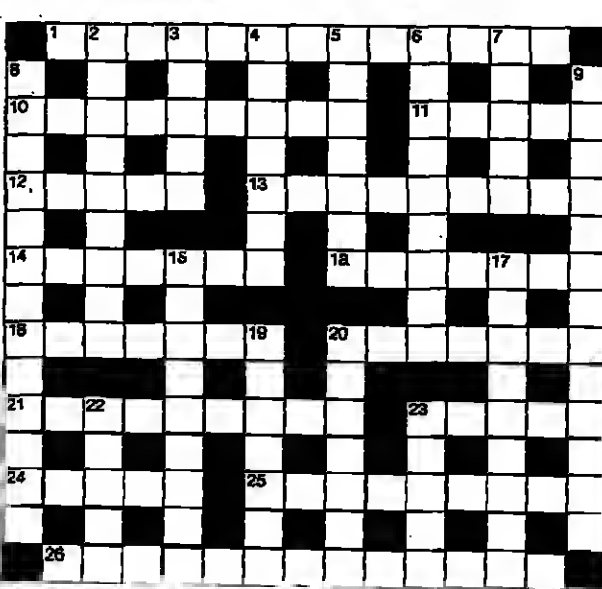
KING was keen to point out this was merely a contractual blip, and that a suitable rival would emerge in time. Presumably, the tub of lard which does stand-in duty for Roy Hattersley on Have I Got News For You was otherwise engaged.

Meanwhile, those who find boxing an ignoble, barbaric spectacle, the opposite of what it was when Ali was in his pomp, must be loving this. There is no need for them to lobby for legislation to see it banned. The way the sport is going it will be laughed into oblivion.

Jim A Little Special: A Muhammad Ali Reader, edited by Gerald Early (Yellow Jersey Press, £16)

Guardian Crossword No 21,434

Set by Gordius

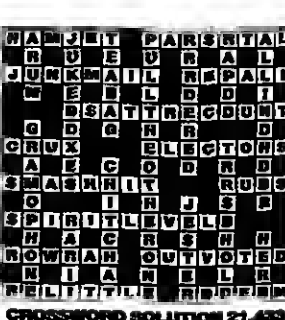


Across

- 1 Ascribe? (6,5)
- 10 A river's mad about an educated girl he stops to help (9)
- 11 Set to become mature without direction (5)
- 12 Mountains situated in the Libyan desert (5)
- 13 Woman of the streets contrived to ensnare politician? (9)
- 14 Upper class sort is to provide prospective partners (7)
- 16 Gun licence shortly rejected for maker of replica... (7)
- 18 ... denied necessity to carry a firearm (7)
- 20 Made up hard papers? Possibly (7)
- 21 Insect consuming article about to end (5)

Down

- 2 Putting right engineers in decline (5)
- 3 Welsh mythical figure of girl carrying her daughter... (5)
- 4 ... figure consistent with inexactitudes about the child (7)
- 6 So many—up to 500—currently productive (7)
- 6 Land on time—from long distance (5-4)
- 7 Flower provides king with endless honey (5)
- 8 How SAS offence turns into a shedding of blood (13)
- 9 Steel proceeds abandoned as church articles (8,5)
- 15 Starter for Oxford University boat? (9)
- 17 Mental patient seen as part of power structure? (9)
- 19 Conscript given something to float in the river (7)
- 20 What critics get—small change for their work (7)
- 22 A runner in Kanadu who... (5)
- 23 ... runs fast at first, then turn slow (5)

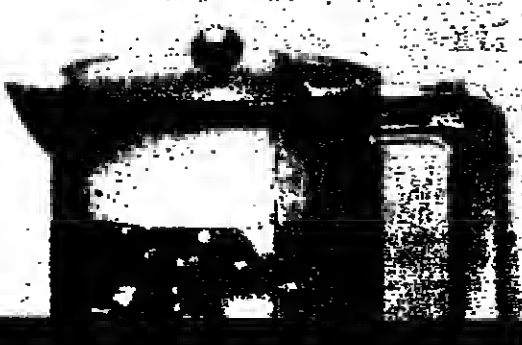


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After the lecture a young woman was telling anyone who would listen about the time she and her boyfriend saw a UFO. It was a fairly convincing account, until she mentioned that it happened at 5.30am and they were on their way back from a rave at the time. Making Ufology into proper science

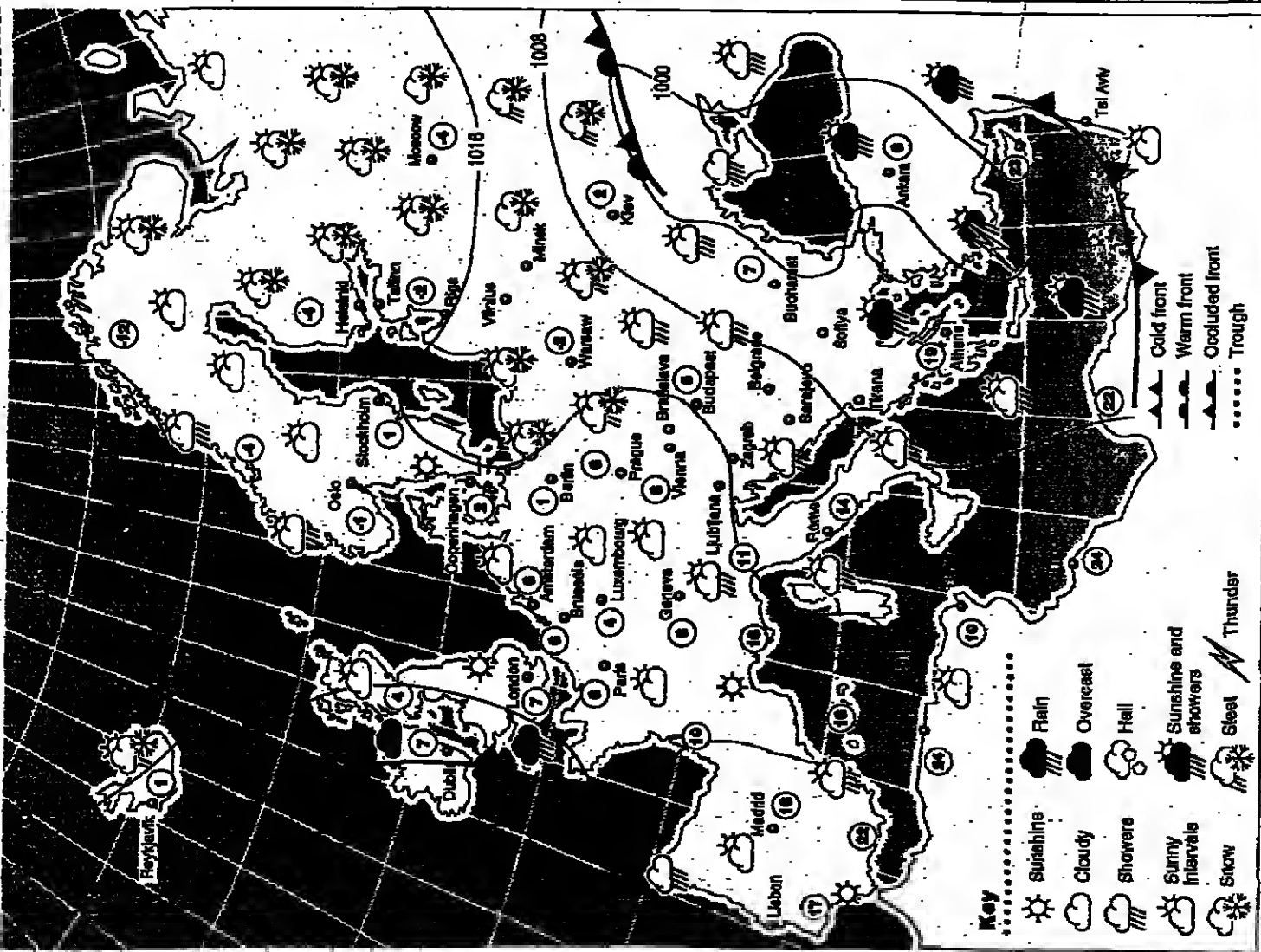
G2 page 5

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The weather in Europe



European weather outlook

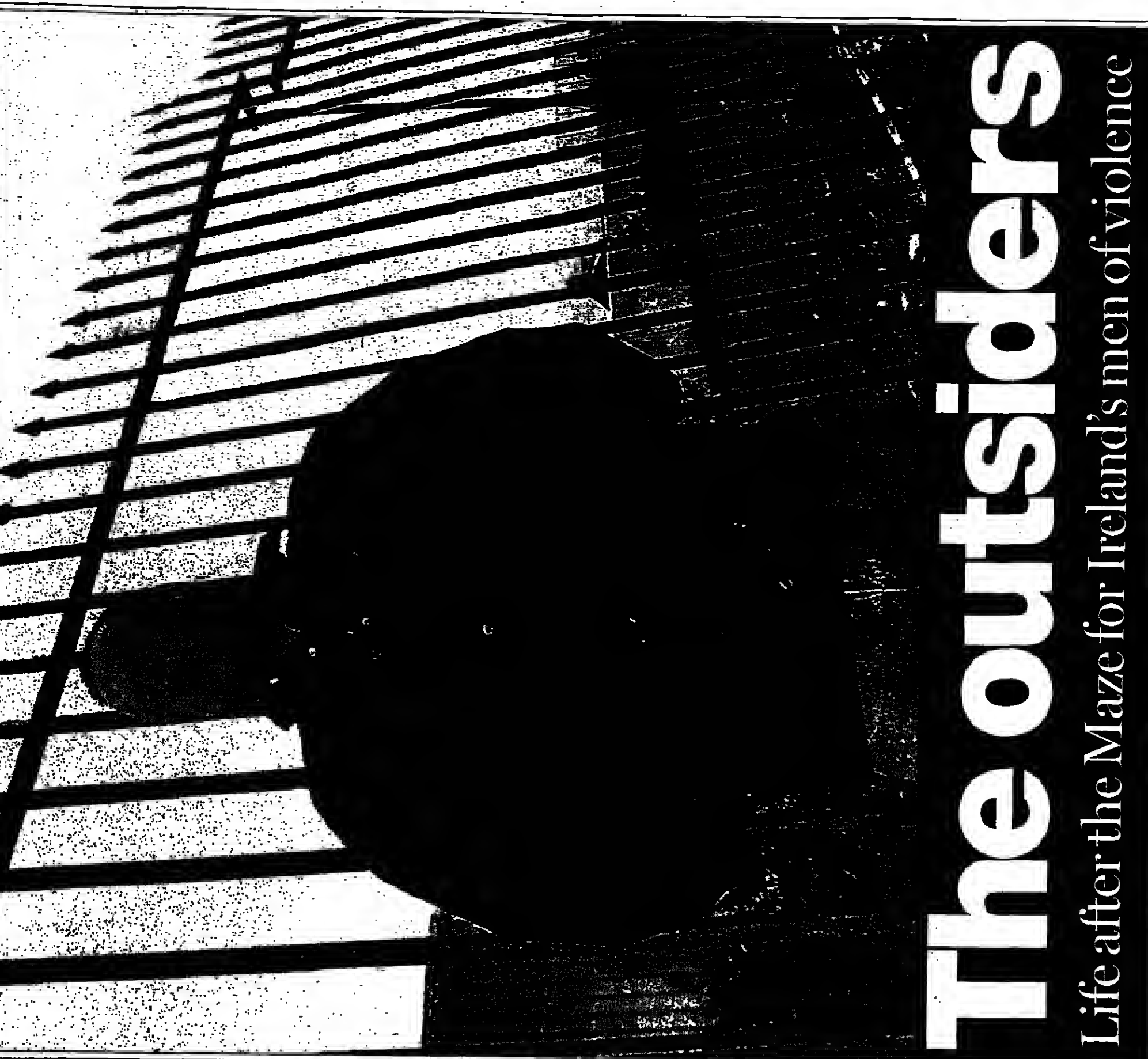
There will be a few showers in the north and west, but the sun will be out in the south. In the north, there will be a few showers in the north and west, but the sun will be out in the south. In the north, there will be a few showers in the north and west, but the sun will be out in the south.

Television and radio

- BBC 1** 7.00am News, 8.00am News, 9.00am News, 10.00am News, 11.00am News, 12.00pm News, 1.00pm News, 2.00pm News, 3.00pm News, 4.00pm News, 5.00pm News, 6.00pm News, 7.00pm News, 8.00pm News, 9.00pm News, 10.00pm News, 11.00pm News, 12.00am News.
- BBC 2** 7.00am News, 8.00am News, 9.00am News, 10.00am News, 11.00am News, 12.00pm News, 1.00pm News, 2.00pm News, 3.00pm News, 4.00pm News, 5.00pm News, 6.00pm News, 7.00pm News, 8.00pm News, 9.00pm News, 10.00pm News, 11.00pm News, 12.00am News.
- BBC 3** 7.00am News, 8.00am News, 9.00am News, 10.00am News, 11.00am News, 12.00pm News, 1.00pm News, 2.00pm News, 3.00pm News, 4.00pm News, 5.00pm News, 6.00pm News, 7.00pm News, 8.00pm News, 9.00pm News, 10.00pm News, 11.00pm News, 12.00am News.

Q2

The Guardian Tuesday November 17 1998 Health 10 • Quick crossword 18 • Radio, Television and European Weather 16



The outsiders

Life after the Maze for Ireland's men of violence

Plus education
Drugs awareness
for five year olds
12

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Willem Dafoe's
reputation
is big...
8

Women
Babies behind
bars: prisoners
and their
children
7

Inside Story
The accidental
launderer - one
woman's court
ordeal
4

that for 40 years.

**Do I look
like a
money
launderer
to you?**

Pat Taylor didn't think anything of the \$42,000 her son had given her to look after — until Customs came knocking on the door. **David Ward** reports on a schoolteacher's courtroom nightmare

The investigation concerned four cheques worth together \$44,000 which, in varying degrees, had been transferred to Mrs. Thyro's Shipowners' Building Society account from a Halifax account in the name of Mr. Keran, his 31-year-old son from their first marriage.

Keran, who had run a Mitchen Athletic business in Dewsbury, told him that he had decided to sell up

But on July 1 this year, Patricia Taylor came home at last from her usual busy day as acting head of a nearby junior school; some nattering to do, perhaps some lesson preparation, then a bit of a rest. She was ready, then, to be asked to

was in the garage by her husband Gene, who had nipped out to warn her that four men and a woman from Her Majesty's Customs and Excise had come to call and planned to arrest her.

Stupefied that Mrs Taylor had landed some of the profits from an international plot to smuggle cocaine worth possibly \$700 million from South America to Europe, the five let her from that comfortable sitting room, opened the door of their unmanicured car, and watched by a TV camera crew making a documentary about their work, whisked her off to a police station in Leeds.

"In the old days, the police used to have black Wolseleys," Clark remembers. "This was a black Nissan but it was just as threatening. I can still see that bloody car now."

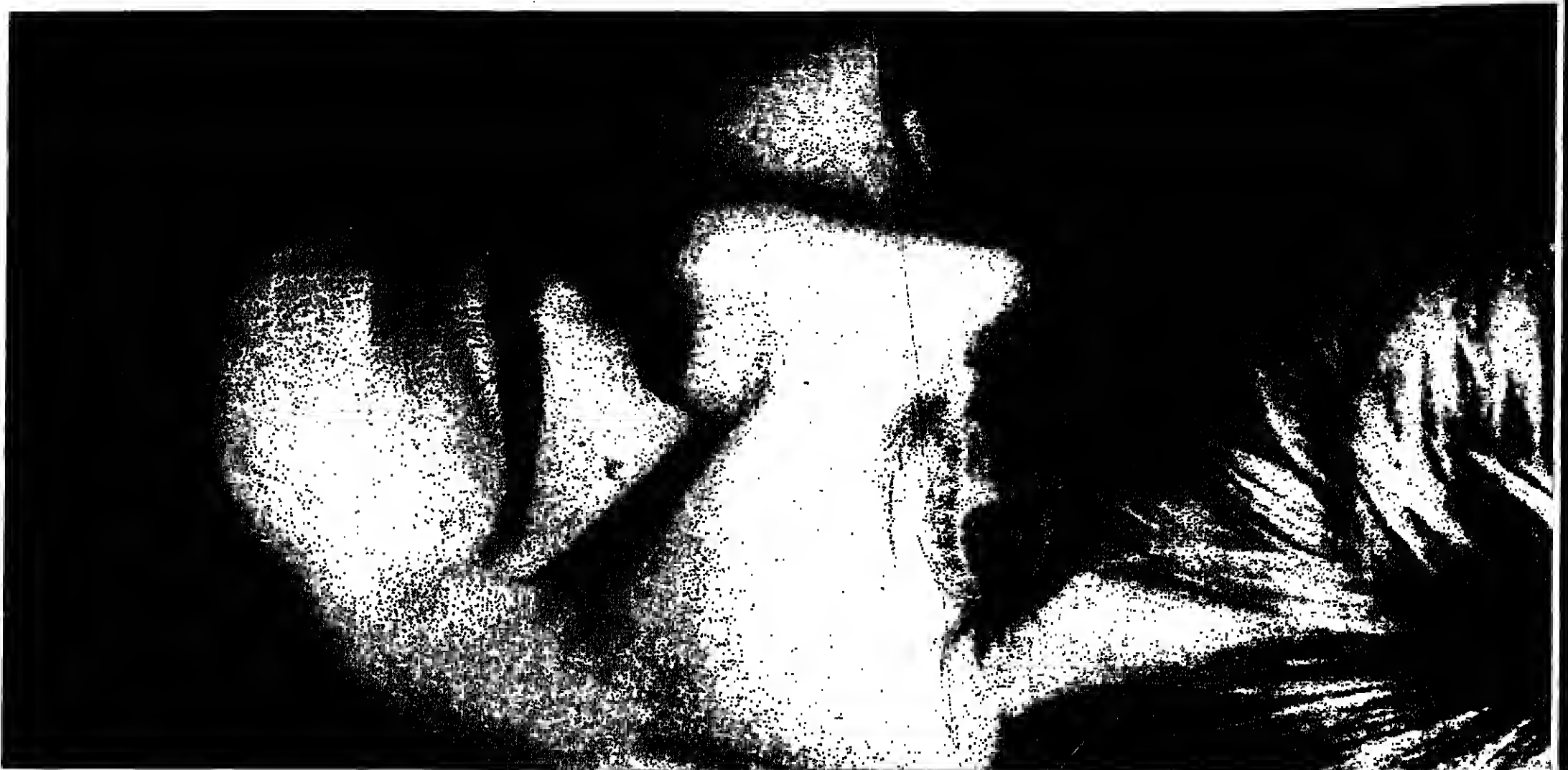
Clark says he never saw Mrs Taylor again as long as we were both alive. He always seemed a bit preoccupied. A close friend who saw him just before he went dead, he was a bag of nerves, virtually unrecognizable.

Kieran rang him several times over vivid descriptions of going on elephant tusk. But the police believe he was using this imagination: he was not in Thailand but South America. He had flown to Buenos Aires, not Bangkok, on his way to Colombia and there he is alleged to have completed his part in the cocaine deal.

The majors have nothing of any

The wife and investigators located his wife in a cell while they waited for a duty solicitor, and then questioned her until 11.30pm before allowing her to return home. Not mentioning she rang the chairman of her school's governors, was at once sent on sick leave and later suspended.

She was back at work for a long time after January 1984, not long after a Land Rover Discovery, valued at millions of pounds and with the Channel tunnel, I saw deliveries on television of this vehicle being stopped," Pat Taylor says, "I went on marking my books and thought more about it."



On January 22, investigators visited the special school of which Mr Taylor is head, seeking information about Kieran, for whom they had a warrant. "That's when we really knew that Kieran knew something about all this. We were stunned," Mrs Taylor says.

Two days later, Kieran rang to wish his mum well on her birthday. "What? They're looking for you. What do you know about this?" he said, "I can't say at the moment." It was a very short call, and he said he would ring back in a few days. It would turn out to be six months before he rang again and then he rang at school, because he had obviously worked out that the phone at home was tapped. A week later investigators came by appointment to search bags and boxes left by Kieran at his mother's home. Nothing more happened until the Customs and Excise quined turned up to arrest Mrs Taylor on July 1.

She was charged for assisting

the last time she had felt embarrassed. "When my brothers in trouble," she said after some hesitation. Others talked about the last

After the game, Project Charita teacher Nancy Hobbs asks her class, "Why is it difficult to talk about feelings?" Up shoot the hands. "People might laugh at you and think you're stupid," says Rabiya.

According to year five and six teacher, Noel Sheppard, some of his pupils have grown to confidence since doing Project Charlie. He has incorporated his lessons into English classes to improve pupils' reading, writing, and listening abilities. Pupil

wrote eloquent essays about their first Project Charlie lesson: "I discovered that Project Charlie is not just about drugs but also about making your own decisions," Rabha wrote. This is a long way from the Just Say No campaign in the 1980s.

Headteacher Liz Kinsella believes that children in her school are especially vulnerable to coming into contact with drugs in the local area. "They need to be given a strategy for what they might do in that situation," Project Charlie facilitates that," she explains. It is also opening up dialogue between teachers, parents and children, with the introduction of a parents' class to combat their ignorance about drugs and enable them to sit down with their children to talk about their attitudes and to address the issues.

The Home Office's North East London Drugs Prevention Team (NELDPT) has supported Project Charlie since 1992, when it was taught by Ms Hobbs in just one school in Hackney to children as young as five. Now teachers in three other London boroughs have been taught to deliver the programme, and seven schools in North London

and 13 in West Yorkshire are implementing it as part of a Drugs Prevention Initiative.

Steve Lippell, NABDPI leader, is encouraged that his early support of the project has been vindicated. "Project Charlie appears to be delaying the early use of cigarettes smoking which is seen as a gateway drug, triggering danger signals of more problematic drug use later on."

The Drugs Prevention Initiative was set up by the Home Office in 1990 to fund different approaches to drugs prevention and to evaluate their effectiveness.

new drugs strategy at the Poplar school. The strategy recommends life skills drugs education in primary schools in an attempt to lower the fivefold increase in drug-taking by young people in the last decade. So why isn't well-delivered drugs

education a separate subject in the national curriculum? The Government says drugs education is a requirement at all key stages and a report by the Office for Standards in Education in March 1997 showed 43 per cent of primary schools have some form of drugs education policy in place. But it could vary from one-off sessions with the police to substance teaching exploring the dangers of drugs, neither of which is a consistently long-term, life-skills approach.

P-project. Classic could cost schools

Free copies of the Project Chandra report are available from Central Drug Prevention Unit, Home Office, Room 354, Horseley House, Islington, London N1 2RH. Tel: 020 7425 2000. Fax: 020 7425 2001. Email: central@cdpu.gov.uk

UK drug facts

- One in 12-15-year-olds will have tried drugs
- One in three 14-year-olds will have tried drugs
- Two out of five 18-year-olds

- **Will have bad drugs**
- **Until late 1980s, girls are misusing drugs at same rate as boys**
- **One in four Britons will have misused e drug at least once**

- One in 10 Britons is likely to misuse drugs every year
- One in 20 is likely to misuse drugs every month
- Less than one per cent of the population has tried an opiate drug, eg heroin, morphine or opium

● Among under-35s, two out of five will have tried drugs

Sources, Institute for the Study of Drug Dependence

Academic war to end all wars

versus students account for almost one in three students at UK universities. While the influx of foreign students and the faster sign-ups of British higher-education institutions to recruit them have resulted plenty of publicity, a quiet revolution has gone underway, indeed.

For an increasing proportion of these students across "at universities in the UK at all," they study

the East," notes Barnwell and Pearce. "What's believed Australia and the US are market leaders and the majority of developed industrial economies will follow their lead during the next five to 10 years. There are clear signs that universities and examination bodies in other countries (most notably Canada and South Africa) are becoming increasingly active in exploiting overseas education and training markets."

The report concludes: "Trade in knowledge and skills will grow as much as the pressures on governments to create 'high skill' societies continue to intensify and trade barriers are eliminated with the wide spread enforcement of World Trade Organisation provisions."

As business becomes global, so the advantages of international qualification increase. People in developing and transitional countries want the competitive advantages of a recognised qualification.

140,000 students enrolled at UK universities, according to a report by Sussex University's Institute of Development Studies.

The study, by Paul Bennett and Terry Pearce, argues this is part of a process of internationalising higher education that will have far-reaching consequences.

"Just as the Coca-Cola and McDonald's corporations awarded franchises to companies and entrepreneurs in overseas countries to produce their products under

such as the MBA, while international companies with training and education help them understand, especially when integrated production systems straddle national boundaries.

The British government's Department of Trade and Industry estimates that foreign exchange earnings from education were just £9 billion in 1997, up from £7 billion the previous year, with overseas students contributing 40% of that total. Bennett adds that about

lightly defragmented (personally owned) conditions, so too are a rapidly growing number of universities financing other overseas institutions to offset their "degree and other qualifications."

They point a justified red-hot global competition involving private universities and companies as well as governments. "The market potentially has direct effects for universities located in Britain, US and Australian universities."

They also have just received pre-torial redaction with the emergence of SCOTLAND KNOWLEDGE, a £2.2 million investment by all Scotland's higher education institutions and 20 commercial companies, including General Accident and Shell UK.

Investment in distance learning at Scottish universities and colleges are worth £220 million a year to British universities.

of the 1990s, many overseas students have been able to obtain more affordable qualifications, and the trend has been reinforced by the fact that large-scale liberalisation has resulted in a rapid diversification of the international sector of tertiary education. In many countries, as higher-education incomes increasingly privatised, the direct costs by foreign providers of education have become increasingly equitable.

Provision of higher education has become increasingly internationalised in both Australia and the UK during the 1990s and, although some courses have been validated courses for overseas students, many courses have been structured to attract overseas students. In the Middle East, Malaysia and north America to market those opportunities. Swedish Knowledge is helping to plan new training and research institutes in the United Arab Emirates, for instance.

The report indicates that while overseas student numbers in Britain more than doubled in the decade to 1996, in Australia they rose nearly eight times, although from a much smaller base. When it comes to overseas students, the

courses, UK institutions still far outstrip their Australian rivals with around 22,500 courses – growth driven by the new universities which account for two thirds of

investment in distance learning at Scottish universities and colleges is being matched by partnerships in the Middle East, Malaysia and north America to market these opportunities. Scottish Knowledge is helping to plan new teaching and research institutes in the United Arab Emirates, for instance.

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Education



The past ten years have seen a fivefold increase in drug-taking by young people. So at what age should we be alerting children to the dangers of addiction? As early as five, says the Government, which releases new guidance to schools this week. **Peter Kingston** investigates and, right, **Alison Benjamin** witnesses a project at an inner-city primary which is giving young children the confidence to resist peer pressure

The march against drugs



The guidance covers the most effective delivery of drugs education and explores a range of practical protocols for handling drugs-related incidents. It is seen as most effective as part of a wider personal, social and health education programme going right through primary and secondary school and beyond. Schools will not be prescribed teaching methods and packages which they have to adopt. Despite the quasi-official Carole name, which Halliwell dislikes, he does not view his role as forcing any single approach on those charged with carrying out education. He doesn't wield power so much as influence, he says.

"Schools will be given a list of what we now recognise works," he says. There is, for instance, one programme called Charlie, which has been tried in London, the North-East and Midlands and which, he believes, has a very positive effect in reducing experimentation among young people. We're saying:

In her own way the youngest school children will not be taught about hard drugs, but the recent shocking case of the seven-year-old boy who headed in young people's drug misuse so that they could fulfil their full potential.

"Tomorrow, halfway through European Drugs Prevention Week, the Government is releasing its new guidance on drugs education in schools and youth service settings, which is a major plank in its strategy, early age

this is the best of four knowledge at the moment. These are the schemes which are working well. We're not talking then they must do them. There are other schemes. People are coming to us with police schemes, theatre-group schemes and peer-led group schemes, for instance."

It will be up to schools to look at what they've got within their area. Schools may face different problems depending on their geographical situation and on other factors. An inner-city state school, for instance, might confront different problems from a suburban independent.

The Government will be putting an additional £7 million a year over the next three years to provide training for teachers who will be implementing the drugs programmes. Peer group education is important and can make a considerable impact. Halliwell believes. He accepts that youngsters may be more receptive to an anti-drugs message heard from someone closer to their age.

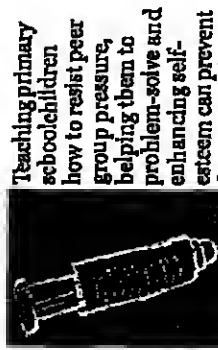
Many parents, too, are ignorant of the social and legal consequences. "I've met parents of a lad at university who had a bag full of Ecstasy tablets and they did not realise that this was potential life imprisonment," says Halliwell.

The drugs education strategy sees the importance of involving parents in drug education as well as teachers, governors, youth workers, school nurses and the police. Halliwell says it is vital to get parents involved and it is important that they get accurate information about drugs. All too many avoid discussing the issue at home with their children because they are frightened about not knowing enough. Or they take the opposite stance, threatening eternal banishment from the home for any child who touches drugs.



Drugs czar Keith Halliwell and north London pupils

Children join the resistance



Teaching primary schoolchildren how to resist peer group pressure, helping them to problem-solve and enhancing self-esteem can prevent drugs use in their teenage years.

Long-term evaluation by the Home Office of Project Charlie, an interactive drug-prevention programme for primary school children, showed that those who were taught, aged 10, were less likely to have smoked cigarettes or tried drugs by the time they were 15, than those who had not. Project Charlie pupils were also better able to resist peer pressure, a motivation behind much drug experimentation, and expressed more negative attitudes to drugs, according to the research.

Children on Project Charlie at a school in Poplar, east London, demonstrate why it is such a success. What I've learned today is that it's OK to express your feelings to other people. 10-year-old Rabia tells her classmates. "You can tell people what you feel because it doesn't matter what they think," says nine-year-old Frances.

They have just finished playing the Project Charlie dice game. Each face of the die contains a "feeling" word. Frances' die landed on "embarrassment" and she had to tell her group



PHOTOGRAPH BY DON MOPHEE

again on September 16 and after interviews lasting two hours was charged with facilitating the proceeds of drug trafficking. She was locked up in a cell because no magistrates were available to hear a bail application and her watch, hood and glasses were taken from her.

It was horrendous, medieval. They only opened the door to let me out in the morning. Everything — toilet paper, blanket, food — was pushed through the flap in the door," she says, shuddering at the memory.

The food is indescribable. They seem to think hard how to make perfectly good food as cold, hard and unpalatable as possible. The chips were so hard I felt like putting them in a row on the floor and playing skittles with them.

The drinks on offer were coffee or cocoa. There was no tea to be had anywhere. The whole time I was there. "At six the next morning she asked for a paracetamol to deal with throbbing toothache; the pill took two and half hours to arrive.

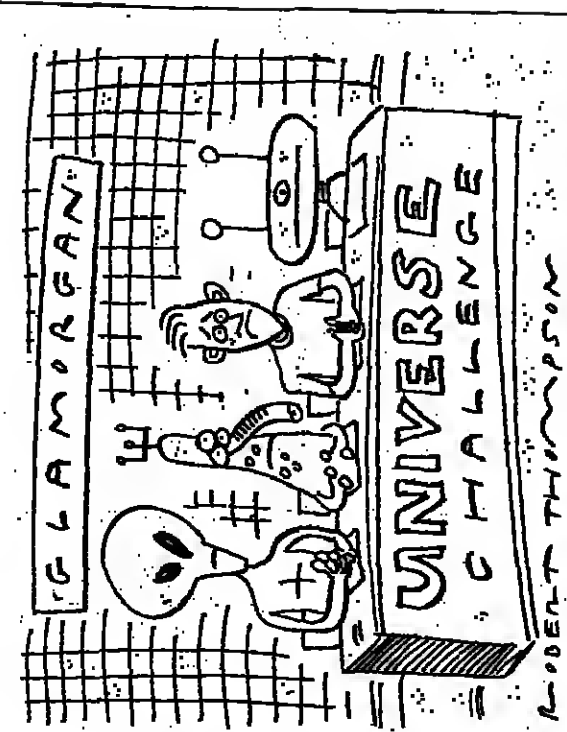
"I remember thinking: 'Did I at any time think this money could have come from drugs?' It was like when you go through Customs and you know you have nothing to declare but still wonder, 'Have I only got one litre of whisky?' But then I thought, I don't know anything about this. Why am I here?"

The morning, Mrs Taylor, herself a supporter of Amnesty International and thus of those falsely imprisoned, was taken before the magistrates. "I was handcuffed to go up a corridor not much longer than this room. That was the time I nearly got it. I led to the guard. 'I'm not going anywhere. She said: 'I'm sorry, love'."

Mrs Taylor was freed on £10,000 bail. She was required to report to the police each week and could not sleep away from home. Big headlines began to appear in the local papers; some local people misinterpreted

Beam me up, Scully, there's work to be done

Critics may rubbish Glamorgan University's course on UFOs, but what do the students think? **Jess Cartner-Morley** finds out



It's seven o'clock on a wet Thursday evening, a time when most students head for the pub. But the lecture theatre of the University of Glamorgan is packed, every seat is taken, listeners soaked by the South Wales rain at on the steps. The subject of Merfyn Brake's lecture, part of the "Life in the Universe" course, is the search for extraterrestrial life. Slides of con-

stellation maps flicker above Brake's head, close-up shots of the surfaces of Mars and charts for analysing the "wobble" factor (the back-and-forth motion of a star that can alert us to the presence of a planet orbiting around it). Much of the science is incomprehensible but viewed in the enough students UFOlogists (ET), books (War Of The Worlds), and art to keep every-

one's interest and emphasise the fact that the subject is (literally) universal. What's more, Brake makes genuinely funny jokes — the X-Files meets Dead Poets Society, "When news of Life in the Universe emerged at the beginning of the autumn term, the first course on it was 'Life in the Universe', not 'Life in the Universe', as we know it," quipped a Birmingham Post headline. But the astronomy programme of which this lecture is part is, the university says, a serious field of study.

Although the course addresses issues such as UFOs and the possibility of extraterrestrial intelligence, it also covers the evolution of the solar system and study of the solar system and evolution of the universe. Mrs Brake says, science for the masses.

Although the South Wales valley might seem an incongruous setting, Danny Saunders, the university's head of educational development, feels that it could help bring local people back to education. "This area used to have heavy industry and near 100 per cent male employment. Now, with the demise of the industries, the areas of employment are in advanced technology and these demand skills. But there is a significant under-achievement in schools."

However, that among the under-achievers there was a tremendous level of skill in computer games and Playstation. "There is an often overlooked knowledge which is encyclopaedic knowledge which these people in. What's more, there are vocational opportunities. The science fiction industry — films, games, books — is huge."

The X-Files irritate me because the scientist is always wrong

Most students are keen to distance themselves from fanatics and the loopy wing of science fiction. Dave Cooke, a mature student with a degree in computing, says: "The X-Files irritate me because the scientist is always wrong."

Pauline Holley, another mature student, likes the diversity of opinions among those around her. "It's an arena for debate," she says. "It's fun."

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Arts

Willem Dafoe has a big reputation. There's the theatre, the movies... but that's not the half of it

Simon Hattenstone gets personal with a giant of the silver screen

Willem Dafoe looks like a giant of the silver screen. He's got a big reputation. There's the theatre, the movies... but that's not the half of it. Simon Hattenstone gets personal with a giant of the silver screen.



Body of evidence... a terrific actor, Dafoe belongs to the premier league of weirdos

He took about his work with the New York theatre company, the Wooster Group, which he has worked with for more than two decades. Dafoe has always said the theatre is the important work, that film subsidises the stage. It was with this influential band of avant-garde artists that he started out working as a carpenter, then as a writer, then as a director, then as an actor.

Before meeting Dafoe, I did a straw poll round the office - what would you ask him? A few mentioned his work with the directors of the demimonde. Some, Paul Schrader, Abel Ferrara and David Lynch. A few mentioned his personality. Most wanted to know about his wife.

Probably the first person in line for everything and then you're probably doing stuff you shouldn't do." In 1989, he plays another morally ambiguous character. He's a stunt double for a man who's been right down to the moon. He's a stunt double for a man who's been right down to the moon. He's a stunt double for a man who's been right down to the moon.

Music Review

One London Jazz Festival

Various venues

Two fascinating events in the One London Jazz Festival confirmed how effectively the programming draws the edges to the centre. One of the events was a howling two-sax blues jam. The other was an indie-funk, semi-theatrical world music set delivered to a packed Rehearsal Hall that had really come to hear John McLaughlin, the headline act. The audience was completely won over by strength of character and sheer musicality, even though many of them clearly had no idea where the artist in question was coming from.



John McLaughlin, a steady force



Sharks

From 20th November exclusively at ABC